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Exploring the function and status of 'Arabish'
A critical study of class distinction in informal Saudi instant message interactions

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Exploring the function and status of 'Arabish': A critical study of class distinction in informal Saudi instant message interactions

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PhD Thesis

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List of Abbreviations

BBM	BlackBerry Messenger
CA	Content Analysis
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CS	Code-Switching
EEG	Established Elite Group
EG	Elite Group
F2F	Face-to-Face
IM	Instant Message
KSAU-HS	King Saudi University for Health Sciences
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
MCG	Middle-Class Group

Table of Tables

Table of Figures

Abstract

In the context of online communication, the use of Arabish (an amalgam of the Latin script and numerals employed as a tool for communication in Arabic) by a young Saudi demographic has been steadily increasing in the context of informal instant messages supported by smartphones. Within the context of Saudi Arabia itself, however, there have been few studies of note. Therefore, this thesis aims to address that gap in the literature through examining Saudi Arabish as a social practice, particularly in Riyadh city, informed and invested by the concepts of class distinction and habitus. In keeping with Bourdieu's concept of social distinction and power relation, the Arabish user is viewed as a social agent who employs the practice as a source of social distinction or social mobility that also represents the status of its users. This study considers Arabish within a broader vision, considering the macro conditions (society, discourses, institutions, family, social groups and ideologies) and linking them to the micro level of interactions (self-perception, position and habitus). The aim of this study is to narrow the gap between the macro and micro consideration that has been evident in the literature, particularly in the Saudi context. This study, therefore, employs a qualitative research methodology based on critical discourse analysis and content analysis, through utilising observations, semi-structured interviews and written Arabish examples as its main tools for the gathering of data. The examined subjects comprise nine Saudi members from Riyadh city, who come from three different social classes. Drawing on Bourdieu's theoretical framework, the data show that social inequalities and class distinctions are factors influencing the perception and practice of Arabish, and the CS between Arabish and English. The data also suggest that the value vested in English as a language owes much to the confinement of Arabish usage in general to a constituency of younger Saudi users. However, class conflicts are evident, and therefore the study concludes that while Arabish is the signifier of the collective young group in Saudi Arabia, CS was found to be the new signifier of sub-groups among Arabish users, while it is through social ties and the networking of high-capital users that sub-groups are established in order to preserve and sustain their social superiority.

Key Words

Class distinction, Riyadh city, Saudi users, digital discourse, public discourse, language ideology, religious ideology

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In sociology, the term *social distinction* originates from Bourdieu's (1984) premier work entitled "*In Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*". Bourdieu argues in this context for aesthetic taste as being social by nature, whereby the classification of class is grounded in the awareness of space that positions occupy, since classes can be defined based on those who are located in similar positions, and where experiencing similar conditions in similar environs groups of agents would be likely to develop similar interests and tendencies, and thus would be likely to adopt stances and produce practices of similarity (Bourdieu, 1985). In the context of online communication in general and informal instant message (IM) exchanges in particular, Arabish is a mode of written social communication created and practised by Arab speakers, including Saudis. Broadly speaking, Arabish as a mode of written social communication in informal IM exchanges has been defined differently by scholars in the professional literature. For instance, Allehaiby (2013) defines this form of communication 'as an encoding system that uses the Latin script and Arabic numbers instead of Arabic letters' (p.53). Another definition is provided by Tobaili (2016), in which such a form is 'a digital trend in texting Non-Standard Arabic using Latin Script', where its 'users express their natural dialectal Arabic in text without following a unified orthography' (p.51). Arabish, moreover, is a 'hybrid mixture of English and Arabic written in Latin script, which uses arithmographemes i.e., numerals as letters as in its name 3arabizi' (Bianchi, 2014, p.128). It is based on the principle of using the Latin script sound system characters and Arabic numbers to represent colloquial Arabic in Saudi Arabia. It is important to note that Arabic numbers in this context are the numbers (1, 2, 3.), which have been adopted into many European languages worldwide and not the Eastern Arabic numbers used in the Arabic language (٣ -٢ -١).

The term Arabisi is an amalgam of the words Arabic and 'englissi', the Arabic equivalent of the word English (Yaghan, 2008). Similarly, Ghanem (2011)[1] and Tobaili (2016) refer to such a linguistic practice as *Arabizi;* according to the latter, the term represents *Araby–Englizi* (Tobaili, 2016). According to Yaghan (2008) and Attwa (2012), the word Arabizi originated from blending the words 'Arabic' and 'Inglizee', the latter of which is the Arabic name for English. There are different forms of online communication such as informal IM exchanges, which are defined as a 'systems support Internet-based synchronous text chat, with point-to-point communication between users on the same system[, where a] window is dedicated to the conversation, with messages scrolling upward and eventually out of view as the conversation ensues' (Grinter and Palen, 2002, p.21). It was in the mid-1990s when IM spread among online users (Grinter and Palen, 2002), and allowed this nearly synchronous communication (Lauricella and Kay, 2013).

[1] http://www.arabnews.com/node/374897

Historically, the use of ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange) as the format system of computers was first introduced around 1960, which supported only the English language. The use of this ASCII to present other languages than English was to overcome such a limitation in non-English speaking communicates and facilitate the capability to communicate in their native languages and dialects. The use of the Latin script has been accorded a number of different terms in Arabic nations (Chalabi and Gerges, 2012). For example, in Egypt Aboelezz (2009) has termed it as *Latinised Arabic*. Another term used widely in the Arab world, for example in Saudi Arabia (Allehaiby, 2013), Egypt (Muhammed *et al*., 2011) and Lebanon (Salhani, 2013) is *Arabisi*. Moreover, Hedden (2007) refers to the process of composing words or names using the Latin script as Romanisation, which is 'any rendering of words in non-Latin writing systems into languages using the Latin alphabet' (p.9). The term *translation* has also been employed in the sense of 'a precise system of mapping one writing system to another, often letter by letter' (Ibid).

In the context of this study the term *Arabish, as a* nomenclature, will be deployed in order to refer to the phenomenon of the Latin script and Arabic numbers employed in online written communication in order to represent the Saudi spoken dialect. Additionally, those Saudis who employ this practice generally refer to it as Arabish, including the participants in this study—young Saudis who use IM as a means of informal exchanges. Therefore, Arabish is regarded as a social practice in the context of this study. According to Wenger (1998), *practice* is a term that stands for experience, which comes from practising something and 'it is doing in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what we do' (Ibid, p.47). Every activity we engage in or produce, constitute a sort of knowledge, for example, why we undertake a certain activity, the reason for it and the meaning underlying it. Such knowledge moreover, arises from the relationships, which link the individual to his social world and its members. Saudi individuals are communicating in what is referred to as *diglossia*. The term means the practice of a certain language in two different ways: the formal, which is used in governmental and formal settings; and the informal, used by members to communicate the dialect of their society (Watt, 2000).[2]

1.2 Statement of the problem

In the context of smartphones, which support the written IM communication services, the assumption is that the domination of English software is the principal reason behind the use of the Latin script to communicate in Arabic (Warschauer *et al*., 2007; Allehaiby, 2013). While this assumption may have some merit with respect to the development and spread of Arabish, it does not, however, explain the reason for its continued use. In fact, with the invention of new devices, there is support for both English and Arabic software. With the significance of IM in today's world the subject has been widely addressed in the literature with different interests, such as in the context of technicality and libraries (Forster, 2006; Ward 2006; Doan and Ferry, 2007), online counselling (Buffini and Gordon, 2015), students and learning (Lee

[2] According to Ferguson (1959), diglossia is a term used to refer to two forms of the same language within a speech community: the high form, used in official and public settings and more prevalent in religion contexts; and the low form, used in the spoken discourse of the people. Arabish presents as the low form in Saudi Arabia because it conveys the informal spoken variety of the Arabic language. The high form of Arabic in Saudi Arabia is classic Arabic, used in formal contexts and as the language of Islam (Watt, 2000).

and Perry, 2004; Flanagin, 2005; Contreras-Castillo *et al*., 2006; de Bakker *et al*., 2007), and private communications (Cao and Everard, 2008; Ramokobala, 2009). IM exchanges are normally found among people who know each other (Grinter and Palen 2002), and as such represent a synchronous interaction or exchange between two or more users, utilising their smartphones, 'internet application', online social 'sites' or even 'online games' (Verheijen, 2013, p.583). These types of online exchanges are mostly associated with young individuals (Baron, 2005; de Bakker *et al*., 2007), where these IM spaces are known for their advantages in accelerating communications (Quan-Haase, 2008; Verheijen, 2013). With this factor in mind, Verheijen (2013) suggests that its users abbreviate words for faster interactions, which at the same time is regarded as a 'cool' practice. IM spaces, as such, do not entail linguistic standardisation and thus as a result unconventional communicative features can take place within these young IM interactions.

There are several other studies that have examined the impact of IM on social relationships such as Nardi *et al*.'s (2000) study, which concludes that IM interaction among workers facilitated their social and informal exchange, sustained their social ties and was a timer saver. While Nardi *et al*.'s study focused on the positive and negative impacts of IM on workers, Flanagin's (2005) study compared its benefits and shortcomings in relation to other online forums, such as emails, among students. On the other hand, Bryant *et al*.'s (2006) study did not report any significant impact of IM's utilisation among school students in strengthening or weakening offline relationships, although Garrett and Danziger's (2008) study reported that IM exchanges among university students helped to support physical F2F interaction. However, these studies did not consider the forms and language of communication. Further studies are presented in the second chapter with a comprehensive review of the literature. In the context of Saudi Arabia, however, studies that have examined informal online exchanges are rare. Moreover, in respect to today's Arabish utilised by IM or online users of different forums in general, the literature to date has not touched on the use of Arabish within an exclusively Saudi context, particularly in respect to investigating its social dimension.

For example, Studies that have examined informal online IM exchange among Saudis are often conducted and constructed to furnish a general overview of the practice in Saudi Arabia. For example, while Bashraheel (2008) reported on the variant stances among three Saudis towards the practice of Arabish through reporting their narratives, her report fails to provide explanation of the practice from different levels, such as the cultural and social domains, and lacks any analytical consideration of the narratives.[3] Similarly, Ghanem's (2011) report addressed the fears by some Arabish users that employing Arabish would weaken the Arabic language, and thus the existent need to protect the language.[4] Moreover, Al-Ghabiri (2013) reported the impact of Arabish on both Arabic and English, highlighting the concerns over Arabish eroding the Arabic language.[5] Nevertheless, neither study provides an examination of such fear,

[3] http://www.arabnewes.com/node/315362

[4] http://www.arabnews.com/node/374897

[5] http://www.arabnews.com/news/448776

or captures the contemporary perception of Arabish and the manner in which such a practice has formed and continues to influence the sociocultural relations amongst its users in Saudi Arabia. There was an attempt by Allehaiby in 2013 to discuss the sociolinguistic aspect of Arabish in the Saudi context; however, despite providing an example of Arabish and a linguistic explanation of the practice, her study can be viewed as a general overview of Arabish, with no details furnished in the context of the composers of the examples, the rationales behind their practice or the social and linguistic implications.

Therefore, this current study aims to contribute to the existing literature on informal online exchange in the IM context in Saudi Arabia in general, and Riyadh city in particular. It aims to provide an analytical and critical examination of the practice of Arabish in the capital city of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), Riyadh, through focusing on the sociolinguistic aspects and status of Arabish. Specifically, by presenting the Riyadh dialect and its social status as a practice of particular young Saudis, it explores how and in what ways certain sociocultural norms in Saudi society infer its users' perceptions of Arabish. The reason behind choosing to examine the IM exchanges of the Riyadh dialect and among members of such a city is because Riyadh is the nation's capital where Royal families and Elite Saudis reside alongside the headquarters of government bodies, embassies, and the headquarters of banks and leading international companies. This unique characteristic of the capital city has contributed to the creation of several job opportunities as well as social, linguistic and cultural norms and practices within/between its residences on the one hand, and different social, economic and education status on the other. Hence, Riyadh represents the different context of Saudi Arabia in many ways, including politics, society, public discourse and ideologies. The aim of this study is to investigate the social distinction in the informal spaces of Arabish IM, drawing on existent class fractions, power relations, the power of religious and language ideology and the duality of Saudi public discourse, which all exist within the sociocultural structure of the KSA. Further details regarding the context of the study will be given in a later section of this chapter.

Before starting the study, I present some examples of Arabish use to illustrate some of the more typical features of this mode of communication. The examples below are based on direct contacts of mine; they present my personal communication with two different friends, sourced from the BlackBerry Messenger (BBM) chat services in 2013. The two examples presented in Figure 1.1 were between me and my friends. In the first example, the other interlocutor is a female who lived in Saudi Arabia, specifically in Riyadh, while the other was living in London. The two examples were obtained with the permission of these two friends, with the reason behind presenting such examples related to the absence of studies that present examples of Arabish in the KSA, particularly constituting users from the region of Riyadh. While one user (MM) was studying in London and hails from the Elite group, the second user (TOTI) belongs to the Established Elite social stratum (see section 1.6 for more details about social classes in Saudi Arabia). These two examples serve to reveal some of the linguistic features of Arabish, which are then explained in the following section.

1.3 Arabish examples

Figure 1.1 Arabish examples (see Appendix 1 for translation)

Palfreyman and Al-Khalil (2007) point out that Arabish to some extent constitutes linguistic conventions. This is because it draws on similar sounds existent in both languages: Arabic and English. In order to understand the manner in which Arabish works, it is important to note that there are three main ways to represent Arabish. Firstly, in the case of sounds found in Arabish, these are similar to those of English, in that the user can employ an English letter, which equates to the particular sound in Arabic. For instance, the use of the letter 't' in *gltlha* (I told her) and *tstahl* (you deserve it) in the first example represents the sound /t/ in Arabic. In the context of Arabish, this use of 't' serves as a substitute for the Arabic letter such as in other Arabish words 'tatakallum Ingleezi?' (do you speak English) and 'Mustashfa' (hospital) https://www.hziegler.com/articles/basic-arabic-phrases.html. Secondly, English diagraphs can also represent two different Arabic sounds. First, 'th' /0/, the voiceless interdental fricative such as in English words 'thing', therapy' and 'three' can represent the Arabic sound. In Arabish for examples, words such as (number three) would be 'Thalatha' and (number eight) will be 'Thamania' https://www.hziegler.com/articles/basic-arabic-phrases.html. The second digraph is the voiced interdental fricative such as in the words 'there', 'mother' and 'brother', in which the 'th' sound here equals the Arabic sound A'. Therefore, words such as (if) or (*this* for female use) and (*this* for male use) will be constructed respectively in Arabish as follows, 'etha', 'hathe' and 'hatha'. Another example of the use of English digraphs can also be seen in the presented examples such as in *shy5ah* in the first example and *shaylah* in the second one, for translation of these expressions (see Appendix 1).

In this context, the employment of 'sh' /J/ sound was a substitution of the Arabic sound 'ش'. Thirdly, numbers are used to represent Arabic sounds which do not exist in English. The use of such numbers

results from the selection of Arabic numerals, which share almost the same shape as the character used to represent these Arabic sounds. For example, as in the case of the number '5' for 'خ', which gives the phonetic sound 'kh' in Arabic, and the choice of the English letter '7' for the letter 'ح', which can be equivalent to the sound 'h'; similarly, there is '3' for 'ع', in which the sound 'a' is present. In both exchanges presented here, communicators have used these numbers, namely '7', '3' and '5', as representations of Arabic sounds. This is similar to what Keong *et al.* (2015) found in their study of text messages among postgraduate Arab students at the University of Kebangsaan Malaysia, where such students frequently employ '7' for 'h' sound and '3' for 'a'. The only difference, however, in the above examples is in the use of '5' to present the phonetic sound 'kh'. In the first exchange, for instance, the user has opted for used the Latin character '5', while the user in the second conversation decides to use the exact phonetic symbol 'kh'. This distinction in relation to the representation of the sound 'خ' may be indicative of different degrees of knowledge of Arabish, or a differing style that a user wishes to present. Such a distinction has been reported in Palfreyman and Al-Khalil's (2007) study of the Emirate context. The study shows that different users employed '5' and '7' in their presentation of the phonetic sound 'kh'. The use of '7' is because of its shape, which can be similar to the Arabic character 'خ' it presents. The use of the dot above the '7' is to distinguish between the '7' used to present the Arabic sound 'ح' and this sound. Such distinctions can be made in the way these numbers represent Arabic sounds, which have no equivalent character in the Latin system.

1.4 Research questions and study context

This research attempts to answer the following research questions:

- *To what extent are Arabish users aware of the mooted differences and linguistic properties relating to their use of Arabish? And to what extent do they see these as emerging conventions?*

- *In what ways does Arabish function in the field of online written communications as a social practice in Saudi society?*

- *In what ways does the use of Arabish give rise to associated perceptions and user self-identification, and in what ways does it influence the evaluation of other non-Arabish online users?*

In order to do so, this study focuses on nine Saudi participants from Riyadh city hailing from different social classes. The aim behind this study is to present a critical description of the study context and analysis of the following: the use of Arabish in informal IM interactions among users with close social ties; the sociocultural conditions of the Saudi society, including class hierarchy and fraction; and the Saudi public discourse and existent language ideologies.

1.5 The content and rationale of the study

The KSA is the largest country in the Arab world, and traditionally Saudi tribes were chiefly nomadic with a rigid social structure, within which people were partially identified by their membership of a particular tribe (Al-Rasheed, 2013). However, since the discovery of oil this social structure has undergone a number of changes. According to Nydell (2012) Saudi Arabia is a modern Arabic society, where the percentage of people moving from a rural to a more urbanised environment increased from 79% in 1995 to 82% in 2010. With respect to technology, it should be noted that the Internet was introduced relatively late in the KSA. Although it has been used in formal institutions in Saudi Arabia since 1994, it was not until 1999 that the Internet was made available for public use (Communication and Information Technology Commission, 2012).[6] The reason underlying this late introduction may be attributed to a fear of adopting foreign technology, and its perceived influence on existing Islamic values. Nydell (2012) argues that the Arab world is keen to ensure that the adoption of foreign technology, which is seen as chiefly conveying Western values and beliefs, does not lead to a clash with Islamic norms and traditions. Statistics from the Internet World Stats Usage and Population Statistics (2012), however, highlight the growth in the number of Saudi users for the 2000- 2012 period.[7]

Table 1.1 Internet growth and population statistics

Year	Users	Population	% of population
2000	200,000	21,624,422	0.9 %
2003	1,500,000	21,771,609	6.9 %
2005	2,540,000	23,595,634	10.8 %
2007	4,700,000	24,069,943	19.5 %
2009	7,761,800	28,686,633	27.1 %
2010	9,800,000	25,731,776	38.1 %
2012	13,000,000	26,534,504	49.0 %

These statistics show that despite perceptions about the fear of adopting new technology in Saudi Arabia and the Arab world in general, Saudis seem to be particularly keen to utilise that very technology. As can be seen from the data presented in Table 1.1, Internet usage grew at approximately 2.5% annually in the 2000-2005 period, and then 5% every year from 2005, apart from 2009-2010 where there was a 10% increase. In 2007 about 20% of the Saudi population were Internet users, increasing considerably to reach approximately 50% of the population by 2012. Recent statistics from the Internet World Stats Usage and

[6] http://www.internet.gov.sa/learn-the-web/guides/internet-in-saudi-arabia/view?set_language=en

[7] http://www.internetworldstats.com/me/sa.htm

Population Statistics, moreover, indicate the continued increased of online Saudi users to reach 67.7% by June 2016.[8] According to this report around 21 million members out of a population of close to 32 million in Saudi Arabia are using the Internet, including 14 million of these being Facebook users.

The conduct of this study was based on different influential factors. First, Saudi Arabia has undergone various social and economic changes recently. The discovery of oil in 1938 not only enhanced the economic power of the country, but it also opened new windows to the outside world. Moreover, it is through these windows that Saudis have had a glance of the outside world and various cultures, which do not necessarily reflect their local culture. It is through time that these individuals were able to transform the social structure in the context of the emergence of a new elite class through the upgrading of some of the middle-class families (see section 1.6 for further accounts on these issues). Also, this all was informed and shaped by economic development. The transformation the Saudi labour market has undergone was in order to meet new economic demands and to ensure development in different fields (The Report, 2007). One key change has been in the extent to which English is taught in Saudi schools.

The emphasis of teaching and learning English does not stop at a particular social class, but extends to serve other current needs in the local market of Saudi Arabia and the wider global market. With any new development come associated values and visions, and yesterday's practices might not be suitable for today's situations. The gap between different Saudi generations and different values in each generation might uphold, leading to the emergence of new practices, such as in the context of Arabish. Perhaps the earliest evidence of social changes that arrived in tandem with the discovery of oil and the earliest development within the country can be understood through the lens of the Marxist notion of social change and socio-economic relations. According to Marx's theory, economic change and production forces result in a general influence and shift within the culture and system of a certain society (McLeish, 2013). In the Saudi context, this can be seen in the manner in which resources such as oil not only stimulated the market and the industrial field, but extended to its socio-economic structure in a very dynamic manner.

For example, in respect to the Saudi class structure there has been a shift that allows for social mobility in accordance with the economic capital of different families (see section 1.6). Despite the fact that many outsiders may perceive Saudi society as a taboo topic, due to its conservative nature, there has been a cultural transmission process that could only be noticed by its citizens. At the establishment of the Kingdom in 1932, Saudi Arabia was a nomadic and tribal society with a predetermined structure. However, a change unfolded when the American company Aramco discovered oil in the region, and thus movements in the labour market called for the recruitment of foreigner workers, and particularly those from English speaking countries, in order to train Saudis with the skills required to enter the new market. The image below hails back to the 1960s, presenting a bilingual sign on display above the Saudi Aramco

[8] http://www.internetworldstats.com/me/sa.htm

entrance at that time. English was thus used to accommodate communicative needs, particularly with non-Arabic speakers within the nation. Although all public signage for directions in Saudi Arabia now features both Arabic and English, the emergence of such signs in the past was a starting signal for cultural change.

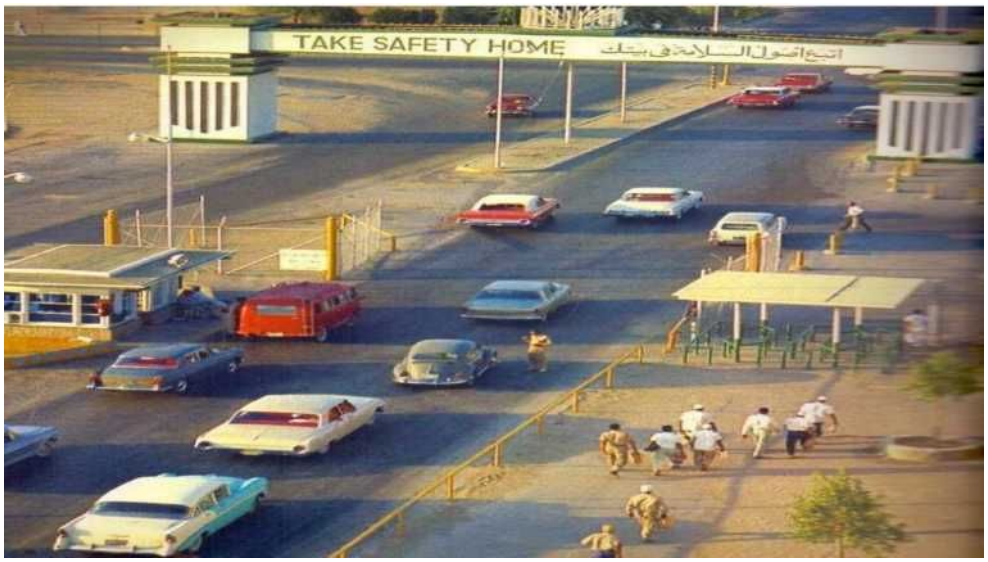

Figure 1.2 The Saudi Aramco entrance in 1966

In its transition from a nomadic society based on tribalism to a more modern state that places a strong emphasis on fields such as education, the economy, and industry, among others, Saudi Arabia has undergone further and significant changes in all spheres of life. The cultural changes are evident in today's media, for instance. The formal Saudi TV channels present the news, documentaries, films and entertainment programmes in both Arabic and English. Furthermore, this extends to some of the most popular Saudi shows such as Masagel, which has been broadcast at every Ramadan since 2014. The interesting aspect about the Masagel series is that it presents and discusses social problems in a satirical manner, where its heroes are people who live in the desert and follow the old tribal system. Interestingly, the show depicts young Saudis within the series as mobilised and educated members, who communicate English in a native-like manner. Additionally, websites such as www.6arab.com have been widely used by Saudis to track and download the latest Arabic songs from within the Arab sphere, while other sites such as Microsoft Maren, Google t3reeb and Yamli serve to convert and translate texts from Arabish into Arabic.

The construction of such translation sites provides evidence of the widespread use of Arabish, as well as online users' need to translate Arabish scripts to facilitate communication. Recently, one of the main telecommunication providers in Saudi Arabia, Mobily, introduced several new packages called ‘7ala plus', ‘7ala 19' and ‘7ala international', where all these packages support their users with extra data for Internet access at affordable rates. The use of Arabish is thus motivated by the significance of this practice among Saudi Arabians in general, and the young members in particular, who at the same time are users of computer-mediated-communication CMC. Furthermore, socio-cultural changes within Saudi Arabia can be explored through the practices of these young members within the online field in general. For instance,

Saudi members are active users of Instagram, where these young members construct different public accounts to present an image of youth to the outside world. One of these accounts is ‘notyourtypicalsaudi' in which it presents controversial achievements and work by young Saudis in different fields such as art, technology, industry and so forth. The account demonstrates that young Saudis are cosmopolitan members, who adopt certain social or foreign practices for their own needs.

Figure 1.3 below presents example images taken from this account. As can be seen in these images, the account aims to present the cultural and social facets of young Saudi life to the outside world, particularly by presenting an explanation in both English and Arabic alongside each image or video posted. Saudis, particularly young English speaking members, are more cosmopolitan individuals, who appear to adapt international norms to their special needs. Arabish, however, was not reported to be used by the owner of this account, and thus such an account seems to target a particular audience. With the strong emphasis on deploying the English language, non-Arabic speakers can thus access the presented information about Saudi society and its controversial norms. This creator is not known in person by other Instagram users, including Saudis, and through the disguise of identity these online spaces give its users, young Saudis have started to display their political and social interests.

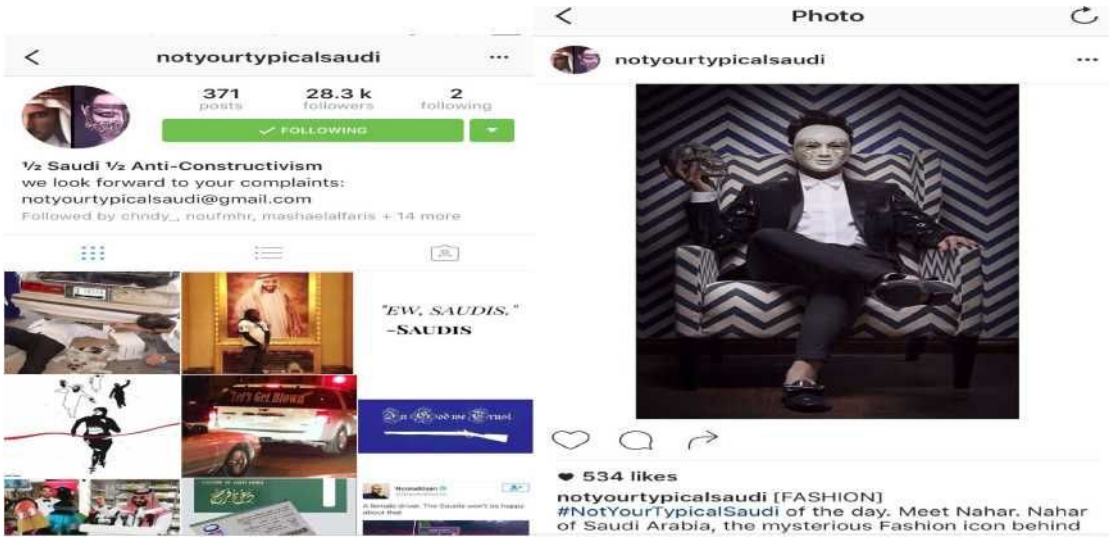

Figure 1.3 Notyourtypicalsaudi page (left), Saudi fashion designer (right)

Figure 1.4 Selfie of the Late King Abdullah Bin Abdul-Aziz and his Grandson (left), photos by a Saudi photographer (right)

Saudis' online discursive practices can additionally be seen in the manner in which this youth group presents themselves to the outside world in a highly approachable medium that contradicts the stereotype of a conservative and intolerant society. For instance, one of the influential members on Instagram, whose name is Fahad and is a member of the Royal family, constructed a very controversial and interesting personal account. This member calls himself YoloFahad, and he posts different photos and videos of his interests and business such as fashion, music and video games. His account reveals the multiple aspects of his social life, being a member who travels and works abroad, and thus wears casual and fashionable clothing; while at the same time the member posts photos of his social gatherings with family, wearing the traditional Saudi (Thoub). The image in Figure 1.5 is taken from this member's account, which has been opened for all users around the world to share in his personal journey and achievements.

Figure 1.5 YoloFahad's page on Instagram

This accomplishment of young Saudis extends further to the field of YouTube, the popular online video sharing site, with many individuals starting their own channels, and while they are presented in the dialectal Saudi forms, the names of these shows have been constructed in Arabish; for example, 'La Yekthar Show', 'Sa7i', 'Temsa7', Telfaz', and 'Masameer' are all words and expressions that have equivalent translations in the English language. However, these Saudi users' choice to present such names in Arabish can be representative of the cultural and social changes unfolding within the region, namely non-standardised forms of communication. In respect to these shows, Ethos Interactive (2013)[9] reported that the Internet presents young Saudis with myriad opportunities during a period of shift and change, where whether due to the absence of cinemas or social activities the youth are creating 'satirical, sociopolitical and fresh local content on YouTube' that is far removed from that which can be sourced from traditional media, with YouTube both facilitating content creation as well as giving rise to a number of notable online celebrities.

Being cosmopolitan Saudis open to the outside world is also evident in different fields such as photography and art, in which many collaborative works between young Saudis and Western individuals have been created; for instance, the 'Edge of Arabia', established by two Saudis from the south and a Western citizen in order to help spread knowledge of the field of photography among many interested

[9] http://www.ethosinteract.com/2013/01/14/youtube-heros-of-saudi-arabia/

Saudis.[10] It is unfortunate that the literature lacks focus on such cultural and social transmission of Saudi Arabia, and thus researchers, including Saudis, need to consider such a shift. Being a Saudi member myself is another influential factor that encouraged me to conduct this study. Observing this significant shift in the context of education, communication, youth culture, traditions, political and religious streams stirs the need to register at least one aspect of its transformation. Youth communication is a major subject in Saudi Arabia, since such a generation seems to challenge the already existent traditions. It is through linguistic productions and communicative discourses that the sociocultural conditions of Saudi Arabia can be understood and signified. These discourses are constitutive of various values exclusive to Saudis that legitimatise and forbid certain forms of interaction. Being to a large extent a conservative society, communication has to be considered under the changing circumstances that this society has been encountering. However, the study does not suggest that these discursive online practices of young Saudis are indexical of a total break with the existing social regimes and traditions. Rather, the study invites the examination of the Arabish status among this group and to analyse the ways in which the socioeconomic and educational conditions of the examined users affect their ideologies of their practice, drawing on social relations, distinction and public discourse, as explained in the subsequent chapter.

This study of Arabish offers fertile ground for future investigation, especially with its highly contemporary manner that may contradict with the norms within the online field in general. These spaces, including IM, will be seen in this study as supporting its users' needs and interests. To do so, it is significant to argue that social changes in the Saudi society do not start from new media and that the Saudi sociocultural structure operates to coordinate practices; these include, for example, purposes of practices, legitimised and non-legitimised offline and online actions, language and religious ideology, and the metadiscourse and metalanguage existent in society. All these aspects need to be reported and researched in the literature field. The last factor was a personal one, being an Arabish user myself who falls within the same category of its young users. It is through my practice that I realised Arabish is not only an online form of interaction, but that it goes beyond such an aim. First, I noticed its popularities through time and how Arabish has been accepted by a large number of young Saudis. Second, I also realised the different productions of Arabish not only in communicating different dialects, but also the differences in producing one particular word within a community or region. Furthermore, I tended to evaluate others' productions, as some felt natural for me while others felt different than mine, which motivated my curiosity to investigate such a practice. This, in addition, has come along with the increasing prestige associated with the English language and its orthography among Saudis, regardless of their age or background.

Therefore, it was important to conduct this study in which Arabish can be examined in relation to the value given to English in Saudi Arabia and across different social classes, as well as to understand the sociocultural forces that influence the introduction and continued use of Arabish, and how social

[10] http://edgeofarabia.com/about

distinction speaks to the use of Arabish as a resource for elitism or social mobility. This project, therefore, will attempt to answer the following research questions:

- *To what extent are Arabish users aware of the mooted differences and linguistic properties relating to their use of Arabish? And to what extent do they see these as emerging conventions?*

- *In what ways does Arabish function in the field of online written communications as a social practice in Saudi society?*

- *In what ways does the use of Arabish give rise to associated perceptions and user self-identification, and in what ways does it influence the evaluation of other non-Arabish online users?*

However, before moving on to the second chapter, which contains a review of the literature, it is important to first provide an overview of the different Saudi social classes in order to furnish an understanding of the study under examination.

1.6 Social classes in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

For the purpose of this study, it is important to provide a landscape of the different social classes in the KSA, although the literature to date has not reflected the complexity of these social strata. This may be attributable to the complexity of its social structure and the belief that addressing the topic of social class might prove controversial in the case of Saudi researchers. The topic is generally considered to be a sensitive one, touching as it does on the question of the state, civil rights, personal freedoms and the issue of democracy. Therefore, as a Saudi citizen myself and cognisant of the attendant sensitivities I will only examine the social landscape in outline, and only to the degree that it serves the purposes of this study. This overview of the social strata will provide some insight into the mechanics of Saudi society and how these relate to the value placed on the English language within each stratum. Moreover, since the aim of this work is to examine the status of Arabish in Saudi Arabia and the manner in which its discursive practices can reflect the historical and sociocultural conditions of its users and the general structure of the society, using Bourdieu's concept of habitus and cultural capital, as discussed in Chapter 2, an overview of these social classes is relevant. In doing so, it will be possible to examine whether these links exercise any influence on their perceptions of Arabish. An example of such links would be the educational background, schooling and lifestyle, which can help to determine the extent of the value they place on English orthographic script and whether this has influenced their choice of Arabish as a means for their online written communications. Arab societies in general are based on social structures, which foster distinction between the social classes (Nydell, 2012), including the structure of Saudi Arabia.

Social class is something an individual is born into and is an attribute of both familial and tribal backgrounds (Ibid). It is important to state that this study treats both class and status as being relatively dependant on each other, following Bourdieu's perception of social class as being constitutive of the

cultural artefacts, body and taste in a given culture (see Bourdieu, 1984), which extends beyond the association of class to economic conditions (see for example, Weber, 1968). Status for Bourdieu is a reflection (symbolic) of the social class. Thus, the description and treatment of Saudi social classes in this study are based on Bourdieu's notion, which according to O'Connor (2004) is from a sociological standpoint, with social class perceived as a 'structure'. Hence, this study adopts this sociological perspective of social classes, arguing that in Saudi Arabia social class is something a person is born with in a given class structure that has been constructed at some point in the past. Construction of these social hierarchies was conditioned to particular cultural conditions and norms within the country, and each social class is distinguished not only in respect to their socioeconomic ailments but also in relation to the family historical background. In Saudi Arabia, for example, people would identify each other's status from both the family name, which reflects the individual's social status or position, and from the individual's lifestyle, represented by material wealth. In respect of class, Saudi society is divided into five different social classes: the royal family, the elite upper class, the elite upper-middle class, the middle class and finally the working class. All these classes are explained in the following section. However, the study does not claim that these nine participants are representative of the full social panoply of Saudi society, as noted above, with three from the elite upper class or Established Elite Group (EEG), three from the Elite upper-middle-class Group (EG) and three from the Middle-Class Group (MCG).

The aim as stated is to address how Arabish users of different classes address their significance towards Arabish, and to investigate whether variant perceptions exist depending on the user's background or in Bourdieu's words, *the habitus*. All these classes are also explained in the following section, and the selection criteria employed in relation to the participants are detailed in the methodology chapter of this work. In the context of Saudi social classes, there has been a significant lack of investigation to date, and it was only the work of Rugh (1973) that signified these social hierarchies, despite it being somewhat dated. In addition, although Saudi Arabia has undergone various social changes in the context of class and class mobility, Rugh's classification of the elite, middle and working classes in Saudi Arabia at that time somehow relates to the current situation in the Kingdom. As such, he noted that the elite constitutes both the royal Al Saud family, some well-known religious figures or 'Sheikhs' and well-known families with economic power. However, the power possessed by these religious figures and wealthy families is less in comparison to the royal members. The first class is the royal family, which constitutes only members of the Al Saud family. This class is technically regarded as not just being representative of the KSA, but as the actual owners of all that it constitutes. According to Hertog (2011), the Al Saud family is unconstrained in its exercise of social, economic and political power within the Kingdom. In actuality, this means that none of the traditional Saudi tribes, clergymen or merchants are technically empowered to make any decisions in relation to matters of the state (Ibid). This class can be seen as being free from the normal constraints, which usually apply with respect to the exercise of power within the sphere of national government.

However, it is important to note that political, social and economic power is not equally distributed among members of the royal family. Although the literature has not examined this point in any great depth, the social divisions within the Al Saud family are held to be both complex and involved, with some members falling outside of the social class of the royal family itself and held rather to be members of both classes within the elite category (the elite upper class and the elite upper- middle class). These classifications are dependent on both economic power and the degree of familial propinquity to King Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al Saud, the original founder of the Kingdom in 1932. The elite, moreover, is in fact similar to the first class in the context of social status and economic resources, while the only difference is that they do not have the same degree of political power as the first class. Despite Hertog's (2011) assumption that the first class, which he equates with the state, cannot be influenced by any of the other social classes, Glosemeyer (2004) argues that there are three different classifications of the Saudi elite, which, to some extent, have social and political influence on Saudi society and decision-making. Glosemeyer sets out the divisions of this elite as firstly the royal family group, which is comprised solely of members of the Al Saud family; secondly, some members of the royal family, upper -class well-known families, some high-profile religious figures and other prominent professionals; while the last group constitutes some members of the royal family, upper-middle class well- known families, religious figures, business and professional figures with tribal backgrounds.

However, for the purposes of this study, I will use the phrase *established elite* to refer to the second group and *elite* to refer to the third group, as proposed in the classification of Glosemeyer, since their social but not political influence can be regarded as more powerful than that of the first group (the state). The relevant details in relation to these two groups are set out below. The elite are considered to be the most influential class in Saudi with respect to social matters, and tend to have a disproportionate influence on the dynamics of society (Hertog, 2011). With respect to the first of these groups - the royal family members and well-known upper-class families, including some religious figures - their social and economic power is seen as deriving from their marital links with both members of the Al Saud family and other upper-class families, where these Al Saud family members are direct cousins of King Abdulaziz. As such, these royal family members occupy a prestigious position within society generally and among the extended Al Saud family in particular. Therefore, these matrimonial arrangements are beneficial for both the members of the well-known and Al Saud families, resulting as they do in a marrying of economic resources with social status and power, with attendant benefits for both groups. This first elite group, moreover, can be seen as influential in respect of different aspects of Saudi society, particularly in relation to the educational sector, where its members have access to superior levels of education, with their children often being sent abroad to schools in English-speaking countries. Moreover, their social power extends to their construction of the Saudi public discourse, a point that is thoroughly discussed in the following chapter.

This elite social class can also in fact determine and control not only the structure of Saudi institutions, but also the distribution of wealth and access to resources (Hertog, 2011). As such, within the domain of this social elite, English is considered to be of particular importance, a fact reflected in not just the predominance of English within the private school curricula, but also in the establishment of these schools by that very elite, with notable examples including Al Riyadh, Al Mamlakh and Al Tarbyah. Accordingly, Niblock and Malik (2007) raise the question of the nature of the relationship between private institutions and the state in Saudi Arabia and whether such institutions are subject to the influence of any particular social structure, group or power. In this context, these can be seen to embrace the personal links between this elite group and the state, which facilitate the establishment of private schools and the acclaimed legitimacy of a system, which works to maintain the class order and social distinctions. This influence is evident in the fact that although recently a large number of such private schools have increased their intake of students from a middle- class background - for example, Alemtiaz, Al-Majid and many other schools- the most well- known of the Saudi private schools still tend to be reserved almost exclusively for the children of this social elite and royal family members, where the higher school fees tend to act as the primary barrier to inclusion.

Another difference among these various types of private schools is that in the less privileged ones, although English is taught from kindergarten, all the English teachers are Arabs, whereas in the high status private schools most English teachers are from native English-speaking countries such as the UK and the USA (Al-Omrani, 2008). This, according to Al-Omrani, owes much to the view that in Saudi society native-English speaking teachers are regarded as being more valuable in the context of English language teaching. This belief also meshes with the view that Saudis place a far higher value on English in general, a point much in evidence among the higher social classes. As mentioned above for the purpose of this study, this first elite group will be referred to as the established elite. This is related to their cultural knowledge and position within society, which they inherit from one familial generation to another. This cultural knowledge does not necessarily reflect their educational success, but rather it is what Bourdieu refers to as cultural capital. It is more about the social value and advantage these members possess due to their social distinction, which has been transferred within their families; for example, 'the bourgeois child knows the price of an Impressionist painting at auction and where it should hang in the drawing room, like the working-class boy knows who won the World Cup and how to change a sparkplug' (Blunden, 2004, p.5).[11] The established elite do not need to expend any effort in acquiring this socially privileged status, since these values and their 'occupiers', that is, those elite upholders of such values, have been internalised within the Saudi society and its social and cultural structure. The second category of this elite group (upper-middle-class families, some members of the Al Saud family who may not be direct relatives of the King, and some well-known professionals and businessmen) can in respect of social status be

[11] www.ethicalpolitics.org/ablunden/pdfs/bourdieu-review.pdf

regarded as similar in standing to that of the first elite group, while not necessarily possessing the same economic resources and power as that first group.

This upper-middle class has undergone significant change in recent years, as economic development and increasing prosperity have allowed some middle-class families to accumulate the economic resources necessary for inclusion within the upper-middle-class rank. This new economic power and affluence has proved attractive to many members of the royal family, as marriage between the two ranks facilitates the link between economic power and social status. For the most part, the Al Saud family members are from extended branches of the family, whose blood links with the King are more attenuated. It should be noted that its members are mostly well-educated and regard English as an important social dimension to their lives; much of this is attributable to their lifestyle, which involves travelling abroad, and hiring foreign workers for both business and domestic purposes. In the context of education, the children of this class can go to private schools attended by the children of the royal family and the first elite group. However, this lifestyle is also evident in the established elite's lives, as travelling abroad and hiring foreign workers is a commonplace process within their particular class. Although it has been said that their high status has not been influenced by educational accomplishment, the established elite also hold a significant value for the English language. This is because of the frequent practice of the language within their social space and travelling. While as noted, some members of the middle class have risen to the rank of the upper-middle class, in contrast, others have either maintained their social strata or have mobilised their social status from the working class to middle class. It is here that the unequal distribution of wealth within Saudi society is most evident.

Members of this class are comprised of teachers, bankers and managers who work across the public and private sectors; however, their economic resources as well as social and political influence are generally held to be limited. In the context of education, since these members can be well educated, they often invest in their children. Although they send their children to private schools, it is worth noting that such schools are categorised as the less well-known ones, where tuition fees are more affordable. In the context of the English language, this class might regard English as being significant for two primary reasons: firstly, there is the belief that this language is representative of high social class; and secondly, English is a core language which conveys a number of benefits in relation to the working environment and the possibility of securing better employment opportunities (Al-Seghayer, 2012).[12] Although such lesser-known schools differ in their educational quality of the English language in comparison to the ones attended by the well-known members, middle-class parents prefer such schools over the public ones. This high regard of the English language was motivated by the transmission that Saudi Arabia has been encountering and the development needed in different sectors such as education, professional and economic. According to The Report (2007), English is widely used and spoken in Saudi Arabia, in particular in its major cities and by

[12] http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentid=20121211145659

those in the business field. One of the major aims in the KSA, as Al-Dabbagh (Governor of the Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA) noted, is to achieve superiority in the IT knowledge and educational spheres, while training and preparing young Saudis for the current needs of the market (Ibid.) This led the government to provide scholarships for its citizens, particularly to study in English-speaking countries.

On the other hand, private institutions, which specialise only in teaching English, are widespread within the Kingdom and were established to provide opportunities for those who cannot study abroad - examples of these include the New Horizon and AlFaisal Academy, among many others. Although the annual report of Bank Audi (2013) reported that private institutions within the Kingdom had increased in number by some 51% in recent years, there is significance absence of research in order to show their specific numbers across the Kingdom.[13] These private institutions are known to schedule morning and evening English classes in order to accommodate the different timetables of their learners. Most of these learners are Saudi workers such as teachers and others, who belong to either the middle or working classes. It is important, however, to note that such institutions have been established by the Saudi elite, with a view to making the fees affordable for these two groups. Moreover, Al-Omrani (2008) notes that these institutions hire only native English-speaking teachers (predominantly from the UK and the USA). This is again illustrative of the value Saudis place on English, and the language ideologies underpinning this valorisation, irrespective of the social class. In addition, private companies or organisations tend to offer English courses to develop their employees' competence in the language (Al-Seghayer, 2012).[14] This owes much to the position occupied by English in various fields such as trade, economics, technology, and the media among others, and the importance, which the Saudi elite attaches to it. In fact, many of these same individuals own and run these private companies and institutions. The remaining social class in Saudi is the working class, in which its members occupy less privileged social and economic positions in society.

Such members can be workers in the governmental sector, where English competence and high educational attainment are not considered major criteria for their jobs. Children of this class can attend state schools, where English is taught in a different methodology compared to that in private schools. For example, children start learning English at the age of seven or eight, where they may often have English classes up to four times a week. However, the quality of education in general provided in such schools, particularly with respect to English language teaching is typically regarded as poor when compared to that on offer in private schools. It is these unequal opportunities and distribution of wealth from the outset that can appear unjust for the children of this disadvantaged class (O'Connor, 2004). For example, Al-Omrani (2008) points out that the curriculum used for teaching English is mandated by the government and the principal focus tends to be on rote learning. In addition, Wiseman *et al*. (2008) state that in the context of

[13] http://research.banqueaudi.com/documents/EconomicReports/saudi_arabia_economic_report.pdf

[14] http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentid=20121211145659

schools in general and in Saudi in particular, such organisations have been established to consolidate and convey a very specific set of precepts and tenets to young Saudis. These principles have been directly incorporated into the curriculum itself. Indeed, Al-Omrani (2008) goes further and notes that the English curriculum has been specifically targeted with a view to inserting these views and beliefs directly into it. These values work to maintain social distinctions and to ensure that the children of the working class have the requisite skills for a very specific range of jobs. From a Bourdisan standpoint the fraction among social classes can be understood in terms of 'struggle', where 'technocratic executives with degrees in business management and all kinds of cultural mediators redefin[e] their own life-styles upwards, while shopkeepers and skilled tradespeople, for example, inexorably decline, and so forth' (Blunden, 2004).[15]

Therefore, this public curriculum is designed further to assert Islamic values and focus on Islamic subjects with the aim of providing learners with the necessary vocational skills that will equip them to meet the needs of the market (Wiseman *et al*., 2008). On the other hand, private schools, especially the well-known ones such as Al Riyadh or Al Mamlakah, tend to draw on the same curriculum provided by the government, but to diverge from its Islamic core in a number of respects by providing different emphases and elements not evident elsewhere. In addition to this core curriculum these schools provide a number of other modules and subjects, which draw heavily on foreign (the UK and the USA) teaching methods, materials and textbooks. Furthermore, all subjects in these high status private schools are taught in both Arabic and English, while in state schools all subjects are taught in Arabic only, with English used as the medium of instruction solely in the case of actual English language classes. The number of hours students spend in these known schools tend to be longer than, for example, in state schools, where students can benefit from external activities and social and learning experiences. According to Al-Omrani (2008), the number and quality of English classes in private schools far exceeds that available in the public domain. This is further related to the significance of English among different classes, in which its importance is not solely regarded for job opportunities and economic elevation, but also in terms of the sociocultural family backgrounds of these students. According to Blunden (2004, p.5)[16] the system of education presents an opportunity for the acquisition of culture by parvenus that is certified, although research by Bourdieu highlights that the ease and extent with which cultural capital can be acquired through consistent exposure in the home cannot be replicated by 'scholastic culture', while since the education system can be accessed by the general population, there is an ensuing struggle for the redefinition of occupations and qualifications, as well as the creation of new qualifications, in order to both realise new opportunities and 'restore the social order'.

In order to comprehend the difference between the elite and less-known private schools, I have selected one example from the elite schools, the Al-Riyadh School, because of its significance and strong relation

[15] www.ethicalpolitics.org/ablunden/pdfs/bourdieu-review.pdf

[16] www.ethicalpolitics.org/ablunden/pdfs/bourdieu-review.pdf

to the established elite, elite and high-status members in general. To begin with, King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz (the current Saudi King) attends the annual graduation of the school's students. Moreover, the King's children and most of the Royal family's children study at or have graduated from this particular institution, including the Deputy Crown Prince and Minister of Defence, his Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdul-Aziz. The school's social power and status stem from its direct relationship with the state and some of the most influential families in Saudi Arabia, who are also keen to send their children to the school. Learning English is a major topic at the Al- Riyadh institution, for instance, by providing programmes such as the American High School Diploma to its learners, who wish to improve their English, mathematics, business, economics and so forth (see http://www.riyadhschools.edu.sa/Sub_Main/ADP.htm). Such programmes are taught through the medium of English, except in respect to religious and Arabic subjects, with the aim to provide the learners with enhanced future opportunities by joining the most renowned universities not only in Saudi Arabia, but also abroad, such as Harvard and Oxford.

The school itself adopts international standards in its evaluation and methodology, starting from the early years such as in kindergarten, KG3 (5-6 years). For instance, the kindergarten applies a bilingual curriculum that includes learning both Arabic and English. The school, furthermore, applies the California Core Standards in its evaluation of the learning process and students' results. As an example of a less-known private institution, I have selected Al-Majd School. Although this school employs two curricula for teaching English, one provided by the Ministry of Education and one by the school itself, English is only taught approximately three times a week. For instance, in the fourth year of elementary stage at this school, the focus is more on teaching religious subjects and the Quran.[17] Consequently, the school frequently runs events and competitions among its students, and occasionally competes with other schools in the memorisation of the Quran. This is because of its sponsorship of religious education, and thus special programmes for enhancing religious education are introduced. To conclude, with the lack of literature in researching and addressing differences among Saudi private schools, particularly between high status and the less well-known ones, I present some key differences in general as follows:

Well-Known Schools

- High tuition fees
- English is the main medium of instruction, except in teaching Religious Education and Arabic
- Adopt different international programmes
- Bilingual educational curriculum (Arabic and English)
- Teach other languages such as French
- Recruit foreign teachers from native-English speaking countries

[17] http://www.almajd.edu.sa/Portal/AllNewsBoysDet.asp?LevID=128

Less Well-Known Schools

- More affordable tuition fees
- Arabic is the main medium of instruction
- Little uniformity in teaching methodology
- Strong focus on the religious learning of Islam and memorisation of the Quran
- Recruit different nationalities of Arab teachers

The final point to be addressed is that in respect to higher education, not all Saudi universities enjoy similar social reputation or follow similar principles. For example, in respect to state universities, the most well-known ones are established in the main cities such as in Riyadh, Jeddah and the Eastern region. It has recently been stipulated that such institutions pay attention to the English language as an entree requirement. In some courses, therefore, English has been a requirement for entree while in others a foundation year is required, where English is taught for academic purposes. Recently in Saudi Arabia, private universities have also been founded such as Sultan University, which require high fees and others, which are more suitable for the lower income. Although the medium of instruction might differ in these different universities, for example, by employing Arabic or English, both types consider the English language such as in the foundation year, English-speaking teachers and foreign subjects. Accordingly, it could be argued that both the teaching of English and the language in Saudi Arabia per se serve to maintain class distinctions. In her study of Gulf students, including Saudis living abroad, Said (2011) found that greater emphasis in general is placed on the learning of English than Arabic in Gulf schools, and that families tend to admire those children who use English in a variety of social contexts. This is generally attributable to the belief that the use of English speaks to a higher or more privileged social standing.

Therefore, members of different classes may have an appreciation of English due to its cultural, economic and symbolic capital. The term *capital* here implies the maximisation of profit, which in this study refers to non-materialistic gains. This derives from the notion of the investment people make with regard to a particular production or practice within their social context (Field, 2005). For example, members of the working class may wish to learn or attempt to use English in order to cultivate an image of higher social standing than might be the case. People with high social status on the other hand, tend to use English as it constitutes a part of their social lifestyle and reflects their social position. Therefore, English is closely associated with class distinction and economic power in Saudi society. Similarly, in Morocco for example, the use of English by the younger generation is indicative of social mobility, status and class competition (Buckner, 2011). Finally, the aim to address such a comprehensive description of different Saudi classes is since this study might be the first to touch upon such a subject that has been long regarded as a taboo. At the same time, through analysing these social hierarchies with connection to educational institutions, future researchers can employ this work as a reference.

1.7 The subject (participants)

In order to address the abovementioned research questions, nine Saudi participants who are young adult Arabish users and hail from different educational and social backgrounds will be observed and interviewed. However, the term *young* will be used respectively to refer to the whole young groups of individuals, including the young adults. The criteria for selection coupled with the type of sampling using in this study will be fully addressed in the methodology section. In this study, nine informal Arabish IM exchanges between each one of the participants and his/her friend or provided by the participants themselves will be presented. This is in order to highlight the participants' perceptions of Arabish in relation to their online communication. The term *online communication* will be used in this study in accordance to IM communication, with no difference in referring to these nine members employing Arabish, since both terms can express similar concepts of the interaction. At the same time, the study does not claim any generalisation in its attempt to investigate these nine cases, and rather the central objective is to shed light on the ways in which a non-standardised practice by young Saudis is perceived and evaluated in a conservative society. The data, therefore, will be used to investigate the values upheld by these particular participants, as well as the societal and cultural forces that led to carry Arabish into a new forum such as the IM afforded by smartphones. This study is considered to be a pioneer in examining Arabish in IM spaces in relation to the mechanisms of social power and distinction, while speaking to the wider sociocultural structure and conventionally constructing the Saudi public discourse, which constitutes offline and online practices.

1.8 Summary

This chapter has presented an introduction of the study's aims and purposes, arguing that with the sociocultural changes documented in Saudi Arabia, Arabish is a practice that can signify hidden sociocultural conditions. It also presents, the definition of class distinction, takin into this study. The chapter also presents a general background to Saudi society and explains its social structure in relation to class in order to investigate inferences of social power, distinction and elitism among its nine users. With the paucity of literature exploring Arabish from a sociolinguistic standpoint, especially in Saudi Arabia and in particularly in Riyadh city, this study aims to fill such a gap in the literature by conducting pioneering research that addresses the social distinction among informal Arabish IM users. Therefore, the following chapter is devoted to providing a thorough review of the existing studies in the field of digital media discourse, as well as the Saudi public discourse, including the existent streams and ideologies. This will be supported by Bourdieu's notion of class distinction, which is evident and apparent within the Saudi structure, in order to understand the ways in which such a distinction in F2F can be seen to be present within the IM spaces.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

2.1 Introduction

In the context of technology, devices originally employed the American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) script, which favours the English language (Murray, 2005; Themistocleous, 2010a, 2010b; Vaisman, 2011; Rivlina, 2016). However, Blommaert (2010) argues that the mobility of people is associated with changes in the modes of communication, which according to Sheller (2011, p.1) is evident in the movement of humans and objects flowing across spaces such as technological devices including mobile phones in association with 'sociotechnical' development. Users are no longer restricted to physical societies in order for interaction to take place, with virtual spaces allowing the mobility of these users from one space to another. This phenomenon is evident in many societies, and overcomes the technological limitation of communicating in the native language, precisely the speech-like form, through either the total substitution of the native language with ASCII characters or by blending the native script with the ASCII system (Vaisman, 2011b). For example, the case of Arabish and its use in Saudi society, and particularly by the Riyadh city members, is not a result of technological limitations, since such devices have been advanced to support different scripts including that of Arabic. Nowadays, the use of these distinctive online features has widely propagated, with such features being broadly known as digraphia – the use of two different writing orthographies for a single language – constituting and fulfilling other needs and purposes for people. It is this mobility of people, according to Lee (2007), that has led to the production of different linguistic interactions, for instance, the mixing of both English and the user's mother tongue. As a result, online interactions and contacts will thus embrace the use of new features, and this process can be viewed as a consequence of economic change and the impact of technological advances (Blommaert, 2010, p.12).

The development of both English and language mixing within Saudi society – as discussed in Chapter 1 – can be regarded as contributory elements towards the practice of Arabish. The growth of technology and access to other cultures alongside social changes in Saudi Arabia have influenced young Saudis' perceptions of digital media such as instant text messages, and how this medium conveys their informal communications. It is important to note in this study that while 'new media' can refer to any type of media including newspapers, radio and television, 'digital' denotes mobile phones, computers and tablets. The aim of this study, as such, is to explore the social changes while empirically examining the status of Arabish, the associated perceptions and the discursive practices conducted by different social groups of young Saudis from Riyadh city who are utilising the instant messaging applications of these new digital devices. The term 'practice', as this study deliberates, is taken from Wenger's (1998, p.47) definition, whereby every activity we engage in or produce constitutes meaning, that is, some type of knowledge

within a sociohistorical context; for instance, explaining why we undertake a certain activity, the motives behind and the meaning underlying it. As such, Thurlow (2003) argues that in examining these younger generation's various linguistic and interactive practices, consideration should be given to 'technological affordance', 'contextual variables' and 'interpersonal priorities'. Therefore, through its examination this study considers the discourse of Arabish in correlation to Saudi public discourse, language and religious ideology, while drawing on sociohistorical events and public agendas. Also considered are the influences of the social contexts and conditions, personal motivations and social ties in fostering the practice of Arabish among certain users of IM in order to comprehend inferences regarding social power and elitism. Therefore, this chapter presents and discusses the adopted theoretical framework for examining the practice of Arabish, which can be perceived as offering sociocultural value within Saudi society for certain groups of users, namely the nine participants in this study.

This exploration of the theoretical framework is achieved through utilising a critical analysis of its conditions and the duality of social and political structures, as explained in the following sections. In order to achieve this, the chapter begins by conducting a discussion of the literature in respect to digital practices and digraphia, shedding light on the limitations of the field of sociolinguistics, such as the examination of social distinction and discursive social power relationships within the context of Arabish. The argument is supported through consideration of the opposing stances on the notion of digraphia in order to reject or redeem new media technologies as the main influencer of the non-standardised language. As such, the counter-argument is discussed through an illustration of Saudi public discourse, with the duality of its sociocultural structure evident in the media in general and in religious narrations in particular. Right versus wrong morality and social power will be reflected upon, which will also facilitate consideration of the CS between Arabish and the English language within IM. All these aspects will contribute towards the analysis of the Arabish discourses, including Arabish for integration, accommodation or association with the collective groups or sub-groups. Within the Saudi context, despite some studies exploring the phenomenon of Arabish (see for example, Ghanem, 2011; Allehaiby, 2013; Al-Shaer, 2016) these lack any regard to the practice's social dimension and the differentiated social-class practices within Arabish. Although the use of the ASCII orthography and phonology system to communicate dialects of languages other than English is not surprising or new, effectively it could be argued that Arabish signals the introduction of a practice that runs counter to pre-existing practices within the KSA.

Given the rigidity of Saudi society, the use of the Latin script will be assumed in this study to reflect the stance Saudis take with respect to social changes, bearing in mind the type of capital users bring into the forums. The prototype of Arabish users' discursive practices is their contextual, educational and social backgrounds, which can either encourage or impede membership of the Arabish group. This investigation thus adopts a sociolinguistic approach in its analysis, utilising Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and class distinction as the main framework. In respect of online spaces, several studies have demonstrated that online networks can constitute a form of capital (Hardin, 2006; Kazienko and Musial, 2006; Han *et*

al., 2011; Milolidakis *et al*., 2011). Therefore, this study also applies threads taken from Coleman's (1988) notion of social capital, such as social networking and ties in generating a sense of social trust among a group. Since this study considers informal interaction among close IM users and attempts to analytically synthesise the discursive relationships among the collective groups of Arabish and the sub-groups of different classes, identification of the heterogeneous members, their motivational reasons and perceptions of social profit is required. Moreover, the possible tension between different classes and the practice will be illuminated, together with the manner in which such a tension, if existent, has consolidated or dispersed different groups of Arabish users.

The chapter also sheds light on the motivational triggers behind the user's position, from producing an Arabish discourse to the production of a discourse comprising of codes that switch between Arabish and English. This will be analysed though Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence and the value of linguistic production within a particular market, and whether the nine examined users compete over the available linguistic resources. Since different forms of capital are interrelated as they complement and extend one another (Stehr, 2002), this linguistic market and the value of certain symbols are examined in relation to Coleman's (1988) principles of social obligation and expectation. It is important to analyse the symbolic value of the practice of Arabish with regard to the social networking amongst its users; for instance, the extent to which social obligations and expectations play a role in influencing and coordinating the users' practice. This consideration, moreover, is believed to facilitate our understanding of the phenomenon of networking among different classes of Arabish users and the extent to which such connection differs from one Arabish group to another. Therefore, this chapter commences in section 2.2 by explaining the globalisation process and its influence on digital practice. Then it moves on to section 2.2.1 to explain some approaches to conceptualising Arabish as the style of its users. Section 2.3 provides a review of the literature in the field of digital practices, in association with the existing literature, while examining the IM fields in section 2.3.1. Language ideology, as such, is discussed in section 2.3.2 in order to understand the stances of accepting or rejecting the discursive practices that exist online.

The chapter further moves on to present an outline of the Saudi public discourse in section 2.4, a discussion that is supported by explaining the gender discourse in Saudi Arabia in section 2.4.1 and language ideology in society and its relation to the anti-Arabish position in section 2.4.2. An additional aspect in this study's regard includes the field of Arabish IM exchanges in section 2.5, while section 2.6 addresses self-identification and the process of the sense of self within the IM field, and section 2.7 presents a discussion of the collective group of Arabish. Code-switching is explained in section 2.8, and in relation to the existence of the Arabish sub-groups in section 2.9. Finally, a summary of the chapter is provided in section 2.10.

2.2 Contextualisation and globalisation

In the context of digital media, the literature features a debate in terms of online language, including standard versus non-standard language (Thurlow, 2006, 2007; Herring, 2008; Androutsopoulos, 2011; Wang and Edwards, 2016). However, for the purposes of this research, the path is illuminated through a sociolinguistic approach that considers the sociocultural inferences regarding the discursive practices of Arabish. The study aims to extend beyond the creativity attributed to the 'English-related digraphia' (Rivlina, 2016, p.211) to include the creativity of Arabish users, with the lens focused on a local Arabish dialect within the city of Riyadh. With the utilisation of the Latin script, a general assumption extends to the belief that even non-English speaking Internet users would be able craft the Latin script to facilitate the local communication of different languages (Ibid). The study, as such, demonstrates the phonological and typographical assimilation that Arabish users enact alongside the sociocultural status of the English language. With the notion that the Internet no longer represents a unified language or practice (Danet and Herring, 2007) the subject of mobility extending beyond the limitations of physical spaces leading to different uses of linguistic resources is evident (Blommaert, 2010; Lee, 2013). Lee (2013) highlights the role of new media in the affordance and support for the 'intersexuality' of online spaces due to the change in relations between what was considered to be the 'traditional' norms of written interactions and the present multimodal and multicultural interactions. Lee, therefore, emphasises the role of the Internet in modifying languages and the preference for self-presentation within new media spaces, whether such presentation is to reflect a particular identity or a self-metadiscourse of this identity, which she considers from a 'global' perspective. This extends to aspects such as playfulness and the innovation of online users to utilise online resources for connections, and thus linguistic changes appear to emerge and develop from those online spaces. The term metadiscourse 'works at an ideological level, influencing people's actions and priorities in a number of often quite concrete ways' (Lenihan, 2011, p.48), as well as how these actions are discussed.

It is argued, however, that linguistic productions are constitutive and indexical of not only the linguistic repertoires of certain users, but also of social meanings and perceptions. With respect to Arabish, its practices are therefore seen to establish historical, social and cultural indexes, with the aim of this research to uncover its status in Riyadh city and how its users perceive their usage, or in other words the metadiscourse, that revolves among the collective and sub-social groups of Arabish. Despite the assumption of the linguistics or even the visual affordance of the needs of the users of online spaces being reasonably approached by many scholars, such a framework of linguistic presentations is drawn from a narrow perspective that could neglect the micro analysis of such users' discursive practices. In essence, the study aims to understand how the ideology of social classes, languages (i.e. Arabic and English) and elitism being accumulated within the social structure influence the status and perceptions of Arabish and are dynamically reflected in both the public metadiscourse and the users' capital. Cultural discussion forces itself into this study as one of the significant approaches to examine, understand and discuss the relation between differing linguistic productions and culture as noted by Piller (2007), who suggests that culture should be perceived as being 'discursively' constructed by those who 'construct' such a culture, a process that manifests due to the current globalised era. Therefore, the study of such components, namely

'language, culture and communication', must be in respect to their 'context' (Piller, 2007, p.217). Consequently, language analysts and scholars of linguistics need to account for the language in association to its cultural conditions, and whether what is referred to as culture reflects 'national', 'ethnic' or even a 'gender' culture (Piller, 2007).

A particular view of culture does not escape consideration of the globalisation process, with Pennycook (2007) and Blommaert (2010) signifying the impact of the process within local communities. However, Piller's (2007) emphasis is towards the multilingual and multicultural contexts, whereby in global terms people come into contact with multi-diverse spaces, including virtual settings. Saudi Arabish IM users, on the contrary are seen to share a similar culture since they all belong to the same society, particularly those from the Riyadh community and culture, while following Piller's conceptualisation in this context can be in respect to social class. In terms of the impact of globalisation we are to assume that its implications within the Saudi society and among these IM discursive practices of Arabish should thus be considered from two perspectives: the power of the English language and the discourse of culture complexity in Saudi Arabia. English domination and power is not, however, a natural process (Pennycook, 2001), and people do not accumulate its values similarly, but rather other discursive linguistic practices should be considered in respect to their power and cultural conditions within the wider structure of Saudi society in general, and among different social classes in particular.

As Mauranen (2012) notes, with the vast number of communities and their diverse dialects and social repertories each community, in fact, adopts this process based on their conditions and needs. Sociocultural and historical conditions situate the methods of adaptation and a regard for other factors such as age, interest and online forum should be demonstrated and investigated in conjunction with the social context. From a sociolinguistic perspective, languages should not be treated as separated entities. Such an issue was raised in Seargeant and Tagg's (2011) work, where they assert the need to consider the social context in treating languages, which is overlooked in various studies such as Crystal (2001). Notwithstanding, if we follow Pennycook's (2001) perception of the language as attributed to the manner in which 'we understand ourselves and the world' (p.84), this indicates that the national language in Saudi Arabia serves to construct what is to be identified as Saudi culture. To achieve a thorough and legitimate understanding of the Arabish IM practices among selected Saudis, we need a wider scope to allow the conceptualisation of the ontological debates between culture, language, IM communication and social class. Class distinctions and diversity are to be considered constructively within the discourse of culture complexity, and thus 'intercultural communication' in Piller's (2007) view should 'involve a consideration of the resources available to those speakers and the actual verbal and nonverbal detail of their interaction' (p.221).

With this view, the discourse analysis of Arabish IM users entails appraisal of their linguistic repertoire and resources available not in the limited sense within these IM spaces, but rather those existing and accessible within their social context, and how these resources are constitutive of sociocultural meanings. The significance of globalisation is not limited to its impact on community, but rather it is measured through its continuous impact on social change (Blommaert, 2010). In fact, more than fifteen years ago, Thurlow (2001) illustrated the impossibility for one sole language to be seen or used in the Internet field,

and thus he predicted the demise of English's supremacy due to the changing Internet fields and the users' needs, contradicting earlier assumptions for the standardisation and sustaining of English. This is evident in the manner in which digraphia has now become a significant practice in different contexts, such as in the Greek and the Arab worlds in general. Furthermore, with the range of digital practices, scholars need to account for the multimodality of online users' performance, particularly in different forums such as email, text messages, Facebook, chat channels and IM in association with historical, social and linguistic ideologies. Accordingly, Thurlow and Mroczek (2011) call for the account of social changes in treating young online practices and they shift the focus from blaming new media devices for the distinctive use of younger individuals to an analysis based on situating the practices within their sociocultural and historical conditions. Since online spaces afford multilingual practices (Danet and Herring, 2007), multiple varieties within these languages find their way into the digital spaces (Themistocleous, 2010a). Scholars such as Themistocleous (2010a) discuss the significance of orthography in reflecting and expressing the particular identity of its users. Drawing from Sebba's (2000) argument that the orthographic system and its conventions should be examined from within its social context, since sociocultural and historical events are embedded in orthography, this study accounts for the use of the Latin orthographic script to present Arabish within the Saudi social context, signifying the roles of its public discourse, language ideologies, class distinctions and the cultural value of the English language.

The significance, as asserted by Themistocleous (2010a), is in relation to other groups. 'Symbolic distance' is actually what researchers should account for in their study of written varieties, and through avoiding the application of standardised conventions these users of varieties are socially 'doing it for themselves' (Sebba, 2000). In Bourdieu's (1989) terms this is exemplified when 'common folks' maintain their position, including physical practices or linguistic productions in opposition to others in order to 'keep their distance', with such dispositions constituting either 'arrogance' or 'timidity' (p.17). This quantifies the non-standardisation of linguistic practices to legislate a local identity, which simultaneously negates any requirement to compromise their spoken variety within online forums. In general, there have been two streams in addressing the practices of orthography: the process of globalisation and its impact on users' identity, and the examination of the orthographic practices of the younger generation as a 'subculture' (Vaisman, 2011a, p.179). In the case of the former, this perception of globalisation impacts on a range of social processes including the construction of identity, which has/have been well documented. Different debates in this respect have been forwarded, and while some stress the significance and power of globalised capital, others deny its impact on cultural identities (see for example, Guibernau, 2001; Tomlinson, 2003; Koç, 2006; Hermans and Dimaggio, 2007; Zuelow *et al*., 2007; Castles, 2011). The scope of this study, however, extends beyond this artificial and traditional assumption. Identity construction is a complex process, and hence this study presents a comprehensive discussion to argue that the notion of self-identification (self-identity) and social identity can be analysed from a critical standpoint, which includes the complex relationships between the social space, sociocultural conditions, capital, economic status and social groups, and their collective relationship to the discursive young practices of orthographic systems. The second regard of these practices as being a 'subculture' requires an additional explanation since the notion of subculture, namely the youth culture, cannot be examined in isolation from the social motivational factors, including, the style of presentation, or in other words aesthetics. This point is further discussed in the following section.

2.2.1 Conceptualisation of the Arabish style

According to Lee (2013), in order to comprehend the mechanisms of language use it is crucial for researchers to first understand the linguistic selection and choices. However, subculture is not to be viewed through the lens of the fluidity of linguistic practices, their users and the available resource affording the needs of online users (see for example, Blommaert, 2010; Lee, 2013), but rather in terms of the selection and practice of these linguistic resources, which in many cases signifies that its users' culture should be considered in correlation to the wider sociocultural context, public sphere and ideologies. Therefore, such a globalised view of affordance and semiotic resources to signify a particular style is limited in examining the IM practices of Arabish. In order to overcome this limitation, Irvine (2001) further defines style as a consistent 'system of distinction' (p.22). Distinction in this study is explained in association to Bourdieu's quest for the definition of distinctiveness. Together with what makes a style distinctive in opposition to other styles that may exist within the same social space. According to Irvine (2001), style cannot be explained independently of others', and therefore 'attention must be directed to relationships among styles – to their contrast, boundaries, and commonalities' (p.22). Subculture, as such, is not to be deemed separate from the broad social context, but rather a sociolinguistic approach such as the one adopted in this study considers the linguistic behaviours of young members, including Arabish IM users in relevance to their values and functions. The distinctiveness of style modalities is found, as noted by Terpstra (2006), to be constructed by young members themselves, and while Androutsopoulos (2007) states that linguistic practices are not restricted to young users of online spaces, the analysis of these practices requires consideration of the 'individual participants, genres and computer-mediated discourse field' (p.28). Accordingly, Androutsopoulos's (2007) study of the diverse 'genre style' employed on German language hip-hop websites reports the multimodality of style presentation, including visual images, linguistic terms, 'marker' and 'spelling variations', all of which belong to the hip-hop discourse.

Androutsopoulos's (2007) consideration of the German speaking users utilising an online hip-hop style and discourse might not, however, be necessarily replicated in offline spaces. Furthermore, Moore (2004) highlights the phenomenon of when 'the speech of one social group looks like the speech of another social group' and raises concerns over how researchers should analyse 'the meaning of the variant', which could be 'in relation to the group or the context' (p.377). Therefore, the separation between online and offline settings with respect to norms, beliefs and practices is not consolidated in the study of Arabish IM practices among this study's participants, and thus this investigation considers both of Moore's suggestions. The presentation of the Saudi dialect, particularly employed in Riyadh city, is the style of its users and through which, according to Moore (2004), we should account for the interdependent style and dialect aimed at serving particular purposes and meaning for these Arabish users. Adopting a more critical stance, Bourdieu (1984) similarly classifies these stylistic discursive practices as the social 'taste' of its users, arguing that the treatment of class is not only in respect of division, but also in terms of lifestyle or preference; for instance, the manner in which the users speak, behave and the language they use. To serve the purposes underpinning this study investigating the metadiscourse and Arabish status of informal IM interactions across users of different classes, reference is made to Bourdieu's principle of class-taste.

Additionally, the consistency of these styles or linguistic practices is 'ideologically mediated'. 'It is commonplace in sociolinguistics that ways of speaking index the social formations (groups, categories, personae, activity types, institutional practices, etc.) of which they are characteristic' (Irvine, 2001, p.22). Moreover, it is argued that these ideologically (i.e. language and religious) mediated styles or linguistic practices are influenced in correlation to the power relations in Saudi society, as well as its public discourse.

Viewing style forms such as Arabish as a subculture of youth culture indicates their examination without consideration of their status as forms, while rejecting the traditional social structure including communication or Arabish as a strategy to rebel against older generations' norms, a claim that has been articulated by (Hebdige, 2002). Anecdotally, if we view this subculture as a presenting a 'status' on its 'exclusivity' (O'Connor, 2004. p.411), this implies that the analysis of this young culture will be viewed as being collectively constructed by its young members. In this regard, these Arabish IM practices representing a collective practice entail analysis based on presenting a subculture of young Saudis, and thus fail to capture the essence of motivational factors such as social class and ideologies, which are primary concepts in this study. O'Connor (2004), in fact, asserts that in the context of this misunderstanding regarding these young practices as a 'whole' culture, researchers fail into the trap of ignoring discursive and opposed practices within this culture. Correspondingly, Hebdige (2002) argues that studies of subculture have neglected any consideration of the 'historical specificity' and 'explanation of why these particular forms should occur at this particular time' (p.73). Relatively, class consideration is absent from the study of youth culture despite such a social category remaining within the structure of most societies, including the UK, and while there are socioeconomic changes towards equal distribution, class is still embodied within the structure, such as in members' lifestyles (Ibid). Therefore, it is legitimate to claim that despite the argument that each society differs in terms of its structure and mechanisms, and thus requires particular investigation of its unique conditions, if a society such as Britain is calling for equal opportunities, then social class is still prevalent. Moreover, it is claimed that since Saudi Arabia's structure nourishes class heterogeneity, such an aspect is largely apparent and practised in public.

This study, therefore, consolidates this neglected aspect of young practices and argues that researchers need to shine a light on the existing conditions within a particular examined context, and thus the Saudi context investigating the Arabish IM practices requires consideration of the public discourse of its members and class conflicts. This subculture cannot be viewed in isolation from the general cultural discourse in Saudi Arabia, and the continuity of these young practices of Arabish is consequently similar to that found in Hollingworth's (2015) study, which indicates that subculture is confirmed and maintained through the process of producing and re-producing certain categories such as class, race or even gender. Consideration of young practices as a separation from the entire structure, or at least some of its aspects, might be challenged, particularly in Saudi Arabia. Despite the social changes and culture transmission addressed in Chapter 1, such shifts are appearing in the public sphere in general; a point further discussed in section. For instance, the subculture, lifestyle, style or taste of one class group can be distinctive in relation to other class groups and the consistency of re-producing similar linguistic forms to sustain this

subculture (Bourdieu, 1984). Therefore, the choice of a certain orthography should be regarded as reciprocally constituting a taste to be presented through such a demonstration in the digital sphere, and the manner in which a particular preference serves its users need for distinction. Overall, digital practice studies should focus on the reciprocal relationship regarding what capital the users bring to their informal IM interactions and how these spaces facilitate the manifestation and construction of this capital. In respect to Arabish being a culture of young Saudis, according to Hebdige (2002) an examination is required of the discursive relationships between different institutions such as family, education, profession, social contacts and the public sphere.

This examination is in order to discover the manner in which various institutions shape the structure of each social class (Bourdieu, 1986). In other words, the manifestation of particular orthography 'as a situated code choice' (Vaisman, 2011a, p.179) should be emphasised. A review of the literature, particularly in the Saudi context, reveals a lack of investigation into the practice of Arabish, particularly in terms of the informal IM employed via mobile phones in different regions, including Riyadh city, thus disregarding the vivid local dialects that exist in Saudi Arabia. Despite these dialects not possessing or being based on written orthographies, each local group conveys social norms and communicative conventions through their linguistic practices, where these linguistic behaviours and conventions, including the use of Arabish, can function distinctively within the informal IM spaces.

2.3 Digital discourse studies

Considering the aim of this study in terms of examining the informal exchanges via Arabish IM among young Saudis, it is important to note that the literature neglects the sociocultural perception of orthography within IM exchanges, which is highly applicable in a complex society inhabiting a rigid social hierarchy and language ideologies with a strong emphasis on religion and its strong association with the Arabic language. For example, being the language of the Holy Quran and the formal language of Saudi Arabia, Arabic's orthography correspondingly dictates that the written script flows from right to left and utilises a different phonological system. In the context of IM, which enables synchronic interaction among its users (Ramirez *et al*., 2008), in order to legitimatise the claim of this study's ability to contribute towards the field of literature in digital practices, and specifically in the synchronic exchanges of IM, a general overview of studies in digraphia and digital practices from around the world is presented. On the basis of digital practices and the use of ASCII for non-English languages, Tseliga (2007) provides a comparison between the use of Greek and 'Greeklish' among email authors, concluding that there exist a number of motivational factors behind the practice of Greeklish, which is more closely related to the absence of rules and grammatical structure that such a form constitutes. Being a 'creative' and enjoyable practice that enables its users to engage in linguistic creativity and invention, Greeklish is perceived as a more rapid and convenient mode for communication.

Another study was conducted by Lee (2007), who undertook an examination of Romanised Cantonese among online users in Hong Kong, with the intention of identifying particular linguistic features. In doing so, she examined young secondary school and university students' production of emails and ICQ

messages, the latter being a form of instant messaging. The study states the common prevalence of morpheme-by-morpheme as the principal standard in these young users' presentation of Cantonese, with such a practice being widely employed in ICQ messages as opposed to formal emails. Moreover, Lee's study reports a playfulness aspect of these young online practices that in many cases were constructed to attract particular users. This playfulness extended to their creativity in manipulating their Cantonese productions based on the respective interlocutors. Through 'awareness' of the other users' 'linguistic identity', these Cantonese users were able to shift their linguistic production, for instance, by employing English 'particles' with friends, while such usage was absent when communicating with users who were not personally known. Meanwhile, Androutsopoulos (2009) carried out extensive research in respect to the transliteration of 'Greeklish', with her work including not only the history of Greeklish and public attributes towards the practice itself, but also featuring an analysis of different studies, examinations and surveys she had conducted in this context. She discovered that even with the absence of technical limitations in supporting the Greek script, online users persist with the practice of Greeklish due to its symbolic value in being the online form for interaction. In addition, her study reported different variable presentations when producing Greek in a Greeklish form based on the 'phonetic' and 'orthographic' schemes she identified.

With the absence of an educational context and authority to command certain norms for this practice, Androutsopoulos (2009) argues that first, standardisation and linguistic norms vary accordingly from one individual's style to another; and second, conventions may exist to some extent within a group of regular interactions where its members share a similar interest or community. Building on these points, Themistocleous (2010b) discusses the demonstration of an exclusive dialect, namely the Cypriot Greek utilised in online chats, while reflecting upon the creativity of its users in employing the Romanised script to present this non-standardised local variety. With the absence of a situated written script for this variety, its online users signify their solidarity through presenting the associated social and cultural meanings of their daily spoken variety in opposition to the standardisation of a formal language. Despite Tseliga's (2007) findings referring to the aspect of solidarity that Greeklish can offer its users in general, Themistocleous (2010b) extends this to assert how online spaces serve the exclusion of a single variety of the language, in similarity to the context of Arabish, although one of the limitations within the study of Greeklish is that the literature does not account for the different uses across the various local dialects, as addressed by Themistocleous (2010b).

It is thus plausible to assume heterogeneity in manipulating the Latin script from one context or group to another, although this is dependent upon the content to be discussed and the interests that different users bring to their online interactions. Arab scholars empirically account for the type of discussion and topic of interest in different online forums; for example, in the Jordanian context Al-Khatib and Sabbah (2008) examined the practice of 46 male and female university students and found that approximately 61% of these employed Arabish, particularly in social contexts to discuss and communicate personal topics such as those of a religious and cultural nature. This choice of Arabish in accordance with the discussed topic was also reported in other studies of Arabish among Jordanian practices. For example, Bianchi (2012) reported the use of 3arabizi by Jordanian users and posters on the Jordanian website Mahjoob.com. During a study of messages over approximately a one-year period, Bianchi found that 3arabizi was widely utilised

within the website in 35.5% of the total messages posted, when compared to those produced in English or Arabic, with 3arabizi employed among close relations such as friends and family. From a religious perspective, while some studies (Warschauer *et al*., 2007; Al-Khatib and Sabbah, 2008; Aboelezz, 2009) demonstrate that the choice of Arabish was to accomplish certain sociocultural objectives, including the discussion of religious topics, Muhammad *et al.* (2011) found that Arabish was not employed in religious contexts or for such purposes. Exploring the intentions and motives behind online users' particular practices subsequently contributes to the meaningful understanding of the macro and micro levels of analysis, with one example being the association between the use of Arabish and its simplicity, where users found it to be a more expeditious means of communication among young Arab online Facebook users (Ibid).

According to Vaisman (2014), the ease of producing expressions stems from the belief that borrowing the linguistic code of a different orthographic system may contribute to the communication of particular meaning in cases where the native language fails to fulfil such a need. Although Muhammad *et al.* (2011) demonstrate that the switch from English to Arabish supports cases where the required English expressions cannot be found, it is pertinent to state that the majority of Arabish users in their study were young bilingual speakers of Arabic and English, which may have fostered the ease of the practice through familiarity with the English script, typing skills, and so forth. Similarly, many scholars examine bilingual users' practices and their CS between English and Latinised Arabic, with Keong *et al.* (2015) analysing the construction of text messages among Arab postgraduate students at the University of Kebangsaan, Malaysia, and reporting the preference of Arabish for economic reasons associated with the available space within smartphones that enables more width for Latinised letters in comparison to the Arabic ones. These students also preferred sending Arabish messages over Arabic due to the convenience of the former that allows its users to enjoy quicker interaction, while the preference for texting English messages and CS between English and Arabish was more closely related to their linguistic repertoire and their extensive exposure to the language within educational environs.

Furthermore, in the Egyptian context Warschauer *et al*. (2007) investigated the motivational rationales and conditions behind the use of Egyptian Arabish in online emails and interactions amongst a group of highly educated professionals. Through their examination of 24–43-year-old online users of both genders, the researchers underscore that while English is a primary language of use, Arabish is utilised in informal contexts, and particularly in greetings, humour, and sarcastic and religious contexts. Aboelezz's (2009) study identifies the link between Latinised Arabic and bilingual ability (Arabic and English) through a comparison of two emailing groups' communication when discussing social events and meetings. The members of both groups were Egyptian university graduates with different English language ability: Group B was more competent than Group A, and thus carried out the majority of its communication in English. Although Aboelezz noted that software lacked the ability to support the Arabic script, and thus Latinised Arabic and English were favoured due to the students' speed of typing, within Group A, Arabish was found to be a strategy for reducing the social distance among these students. On the other hand, Group B used Arabish to convey certain cultural and religious expressions, and greetings satiated for the Egyptian context. The global significance of English is a major factor to be taken into account in order to

broaden studies within the Egyptian context. El-Essawi (2011) reported on the mixing between English and Arabish in 34 bilingual Egyptian students' handwriting.

The study concluded that Arabish is becoming an accepted practice among young users, and particularly those in the 15–20-year age range, since such a writing approach allows them to present the same spoken practice that is produced when mixing Arabic and English. In the Algerian context, Daoudi (2011) researched e-Arabic, essentially an informal Arabic-based code employed in online communications in Algeria and particularly the province of Msila, which is mixed with borrowed words from the English and French contexts. Her study similarly highlights the use of the Latin script, numbers, abbreviations, CS and code-mixing when she examined different users of differing genders and educational and social backgrounds. In terms of illuminating the intentions and motives behind online users' particular practices, another example is to help signify the enactment mechanisms for identity construction (Kim, 2016). Further studies draw inferences between linguistic choice and practice in association with identity construction, suggesting that identities vary depending on the context and interlocutor. Vaisman's works (2011a, 2011b, 2014, 2016) in the context of young Hebrew and Israeli girls' online practices provide thorough apparatuses for the online identity construction process. For instance, in comparing two blogging groups, one titled *Fakatsa* and the other *Freak,* Vaisman's (2011a, 2011b) studies of 11–16-year-old girls report different lexical and linguistic variations across these distinctive groups, finding that while the former deployed a playful, global and cultured identity, the latter demonstrated a more 'Gothic' style with a pessimistic view of life. With the absence of F2F and while the *Fakatsa* group could not present such an image through physical appearance, online mediated spaces such as blogs accommodated their linguistic and distinctive choices for certain identifications to be conveyed to the audience.

Purposively generating an image of mobilised cultured bloggers borrowing lexis from the English, Japanese and Spanish languages with a strong reference to the youth culture, particularly Hollywood films and multicultural members, this *Fakatsa* group successfully managed their blog spaces to further their interests. Since the *Freak* group did not reflect linguistic distinctiveness, but rather their image and identity were conveyed in the themes of their blogs such as 'death', Vaisman's (2014) later work reflects precisely upon her earlier findings to discuss this *Fakatsa* group's construction of a particular female identity. Vaisman's (2014) study concludes that the mobility of linguistic choices and language reported by these young female *Fakatsa* bloggers is to present 'cute', 'glamourous' and 'beautiful' female users of the Internet, where the orthographic and morphological resemblance between English and Hebrew extends to the construction of their names and 'titles'. Addressing the points found in her earlier studies, Vaisman (2016) also confirms the construction of these two different identities supported through 'blog iconography', where visual presentation codifies the desired identity. American culture is a constitutive part of these young bloggers' content, such as personal interest and images including American films, wealth, the speech-like style of 'California girls' versus the dark black 'grief' seen in films about vampires. These youth identities of cultured and cosmopolitan online users correlate to this speech-like production; a presentation of not only 'playfulness' (Vaisman, 2014), but also 'creativity' (Palfreyman and Al-Khalil, 2007). Palfreyman and Al-Khalil (2007) conducted a study of an exclusive group of 18–19-year-old university students in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the linguistic properties present amongst their online messages aimed at examining the socio-psychological factors of such practices,

where the students were all Internet users who attended a university in which English was the main medium of instruction.

The study reported the phonological simulation, whereby these students presented their speech-like dialect in written texts through the application of certain conventions in relation to the shared sounds present in both systems of Arabic and the English language. Additionally, some variation was noted in respect of presenting Arabic sounds that do not exist within the system of English, which all depend on the sender's perception. From a social perspective, Palfreyman and Al-Khalil's (2007) study points to familiarity with the English keyboard through writing coursework, and the sense that Arabish is closer to Arabic than English, despite the adapted script and the coded form of Arabish that facilitates secret communication among young members all being motivational factors behind the students' choice of Arabish. These UAE students also held the belief that Arabish was the creation of 'young', 'creative' and communicative users, which at the same time is reflective of its users. It is evident that different manipulations of the Latin script entail various interpretations that diverge from one social context to another. This is what Sebba (2007) argues in relation to orthography being socially rooted, and hence authorises the regard of sociocultural and historical conditions. To understand the metadiscourse of a signified practice, such as the one considered in this study, the researcher needs to examine this various manipulation and alteration of the script as presenting, according to Themistocleous (2010a, p.156), both 'identity' and 'ideology'. With the sociolinguistic and discourse analysis, the examination of Arabish IM users' interactivity constitutes these two perspectives of identity, which this study refers to as self and social perception, identification and position, besides ideologies accumulated in relation to the sociocultural structure of society.

Although Androutsopoulos (2007) notes that in many cases the construction of online identities is not an extension of those in the physical spaces, in the IM context and with the close social ties that may exist between two interlocutors, such a claim might not necessarily be legitimate. Various media spaces in this respect should be viewed as an extension to the physical world (McLuhan and Gordon, 2003), where individuals such as IM users reflect similar linguistic behaviours and positions in both their physical and IM spaces. Such a point, moreover, is a main pillar adopted in this research, and thus Wood and Smith's (2010) notion of *telepresence*, which is 'the degree to which consumers feel their existence in the virtual sphere' (Ibrahim, 2011, p.90), is applied in order to understand how Arabish IM users' self-representation and position mirrors that within an F2F context, as discussed later in this chapter. In the context of identity, furthermore, perhaps Androutsopoulos's (2006) empirical and comprehensive work on the examination of code mobilisation in German-based diaspora websites provides a further overview of the discursive practices of identity construction through linguistic choices.

In analysing seven German-based websites with Indian, Persian, Greek, Asian, Moroccan, Turkish and Russian ethnic groups, Androutsopoulos's study travels beyond the consideration of the English language, establishing the construction of particular positions, images and identifications within a multiple discursive discourse. As such, he reports that linguistic choices actuate to singing performance through the CS of German and English, native or 'home' language for 'local relationship management', presenting social positions such as 'multicultural' members, ethnicity membership and accommodating particular communicative needs, reflecting a 'youth culture' such as self-presentation and 'signature'. While

Androutsopoulos's (2006) study proclaims, for example, the code choice to interpret the relation to construct a particular identity, this study further examines such choice with inferences regarding the sociocultural conditions of its users. These examined choices include the CS between Arabish and English, and therefore the argument presented thus far is cultural, class and content-dependant, where the F2F relationships in the local community of Riyadh can be reflected in the informal IM spaces. It is these pragmatic mechanisms of how Saudi society works that need to be considered, which requires consideration of the Arabish IM user from two stances: being a user of the collective Arabish group, and/or being a member of a sub-group, where sub-groups in this respect are those Arabish users who employ CS in their written Arabish IM.

The collectively of a certain group can lead to certain agreed conventions amongst its members, such as how they act, react and speak (Bourdieu, 1984). Ivković's (2013) study examined the use of Cyrillic and the Latinised alphabet in two Serbian news websites and report the existence of certain conventions among the online practices of these forums, with such conventions being widely employed in the country's public spaces, newspapers and CMC. Despite the fact that the use of Arabish was not reported in public spaces such as street signs, as reported in Serbia, it was seen in some public contexts such as on public objects, including vehicles, which is another neglected aspect in the literature. Although examining Arabish in public landscapes is beyond the scope of this study, it is important to mention in this context in order to comprehend the manner in which this practice is manifested by young Saudis, along with its social values. One example can be seen in the image included in Figure 2.1 below that presents one of the main streets in Riyadh city and shows a Saudi driver who has personalised his car by writing a poetic phrase in Arabish form.

Figure 2.1 Arabish written on the bodywork of a Saudi vehicle

The Arabish phrase 'S6AK DMR 3'LAK' can also be written in Arabic, with the closest English translation being 'your prejudice destroys your love'. Although young people in Saudi Arabia tend to decorate their cars with signs or initials such as the 'N.M.T.' seen in the above image, the letters generally

connote an abbreviation or the initials of the owner's name. In this respect, Shohamy and Gorter (2009) discuss the principle of the linguistic landscape, where they argue that the language used in public such as signposting and streets names is related to the social context and language policy in a given society. As such, while linguistic presentations (Ben-Rafael, 2009, p.40), on objects such as in the vehicle presented above reflect the individual's ownership, public spaces are in fact social realities, where individuals can present their worlds and connect through these linguistic presentations. This is similar to Androutsopoulos's (2006) findings on code mobilisation by various online users in certain spaces, and thus this use of Arabish in public could reflect a particular identity the driver wishes to convey. However, as has been stated, predicting the extent of Arabish's penetration into public spheres and its future in Saudi society require a thorough scholarly examination. A further discussion of Saudi public practices and discourse is considered in this chapter. Turning the lens of focus to the context of IM, different studies discuss its significance in various contexts, with the following section providing a general overview of the existing literature considering the use of IM and its limitations.

2.3.1 A review of the IM literature

In the context of IM, various studies (see for example, Junco and Cotton, 2011; Lauricella and Kay 2013; Verheijen, 2013; Grover *et al*., 2016) have been conducted. This section is devoted to discussing certain published literature in order to determine their relevance to this study of Arabish in informal IM exchanges among Saudis. Nardi *et al*.'s (2000) ethnographic study was conducted on 20 IM users hailing from different professions. Their study aimed to explore how IM settings can satisfy these users' professional and social needs, since the individuals were experienced users of technology. In examining the negative and positive impacts of IM in comparison to other communication forums such as the telephone or even email, the study reports that IM spaces were more favourable among these workers. IM interaction as such facilitates an informal and 'friendly' environment for interaction since its settings enable communication among users who have established ties, and thus these individuals were able to accomplish working tasks, 'efficient' and time-convenient synchronous interactions, sustain social relations and maintain the ability to shift from one medium of communication to another, for instance, from IM spaces to F2F or mobile phones.

Meanwhile, Flanagin's (2005) study relied on distributed questionnaires to examine the motivation behind the use of IM by 271 college students in order to compare the benefits or shortcomings of IM compared to other communicative networks including email, F2F, mobile phones and fixed phone lines. Although sharing a similar principle of examination with Nardi *et al*.'s (2000) study, Flanagin (2005) reports four main advantages of using an IM setting: 'social entertainment', 'task accomplishment', social grouping or 'attention', and 'meeting new people'. Moreover, Bryant *et al*. (2006) conducted a study with seventh-grade middle school participants in order to examine and report on the significance of using interactive settings existing online, as well as the relation between such online usage in assessing offline relationships and the manner in which such interaction is important to those students with fewer offline friendships. Their study does not report any significance impact of utilising these interactive settings, which are similar to those considered here, on strengthening or weakening social relationships. While Nardi *et al*. (2000) do not account for the sociocultural conditions of their participants, Bryant *et al*. (2006) and Flanagin

(2005) present limited findings that lack description of these sociocultural conditions, such as the participants' narrations and the metadiscoursal understanding of their IM use. Another example can be found in Garrett and Danziger's (2007) study that examined the relation between IM use by full-time workers and its impact on their task accomplishment. The study concluded that interruptions were not found to be significant, and that those workers who utilised IM were able to communicate with other users, including for professional and personal purposes. However, Garrett and Danziger regard IM through the lens of CMC and as seen elsewhere in the literature they ignore the social, cultural and religious ideologies, as well as the users' societal structure. Another study by Nachbaur (2003) examined college students' use of IM in the Stanford University campus through a survey of approximately 120 users. The study aimed to investigate how IM is employed and fulfils these student's social and educational needs for communication.

As such, Nachbaur found that high use of IM and IM communication was deemed to support the physical interaction of F2F, and counters the claims of other studies that IM could substitute these physical interactions. This shares similarity to Nardi *et al*.'s (2000) findings, where workers switched from one communicative medium to another, such as from IM to F2F. Furthermore, the participants in Nachbaur's (2003) study stated their use of IM to socialise, explore romantic relationships and interact with their friends as IM helped them to strength social relationships and ties. The manner in which such an IM forum enables the younger generation to interact and sustain relationships, since it allows synchronous communication in a private manner, where users exchange and respond to each other's short messages, was further reported by Jones *et al*. (2011). In examining young adults' IM exchanges, Jones *et al*. (2011) reveal the metadiscourse of closely tied users discussing Facebook content within the IM forum. 'Gossip' is repeatedly employed to sustain these users' social ties, while features such as capitalisation, abbreviation and emoticons are evident to present emotions and physical-like voices of communication.

Despite the study targeting the use of English, young adults are no different from the broader young category in terms of implementing certain linguistic features to conduct a successful interaction and an exchange of moral views with relevance to other online spaces, such as Facebook in this case. Marquez's (2003) study of the impact of IM on college students and their social lives in general further highlights different attributes towards the employment of IM for social communications, and thus the practice varies accordingly dependent upon the user's beliefs and character. As such, Marquez concludes with the different reasons for utilising IM for communications, namely, interacting with other students within the same university space, connecting with remote social groups and friends, and discussing academic topics. An additional point of consideration is the significant emphasis on the online linguistic manifestations of the younger generation, while adults who engage in similar practices escape the critical lens. In correspondence with this observation, Squires (2011) reports on the vital role that the medium of new media such as television play in monitoring, modifying and presenting adults' language through omitting young-like linguistic features. For example, in presenting text messages from a mayor to his lover, the media substituted his use of capitalised and reduplicated letters, and the use of exclamation mark – with such features more associated to young practices – for a standard form of English (Ibid). This informs us of two central points: the stereotyping of young members language versus adults' commodity and the

sustaining of the standardised language, and the media's ability to manipulate the original text for particular purposes, in this respect the refrain from linguistic consideration.

In accordance with this epistemology, it has been the youth's speech-like practices that support the sceptical view of destroying the standard language, the morals of the younger generation and agreed social norms. The widespread practices of typical local dialects emerging into online spaces challenge the conventions of informal talks (Themistocleous, 2010b). Language ideology, in this respect, is a significant factor in the critiques of the younger generation's online discursive linguistic manifestations, as explained in the following section.

2.3.2 Language ideology

Language ideology is a constitutive aspect of the conceptualised theoretical framework of this study. We adopt Piller's (2015) sociolinguistic understanding of language ideologies is the 'beliefs, feelings, and conceptions about language that are socially shared and relate language and society in a dialectical fashion' where they 'undergird language use, which in turn shapes language ideologies [that together] serve social ends', and thus 'language ideologies are interested, multiple, and contested' (p.4). In essence, they are social rather than linguistic. Language only exists in contextual interaction but language ideologies – including those of professional linguists – are abstract from interactions in context and thus open language to social manipulation. The standard language ideology refers to the belief that a particular variety – typically one that has its roots in the speech of the most powerful group in society, which is often based on the written language, is highly homogeneous and is acquired through many years of formal education – is aesthetically, morally, and intellectually superior to other mediums of speaking the language (Piller, 2015). With Piller's (2015) perception of language and standard language ideology, the literature has devoted considerable attention in terms of acknowledging language ideology in the field of digital discourse. To begin, within the context of the discursive practices of students, Al-Shaer (2016) investigated the impact of Arabizi on young Palestinian students, particularly in relation to their Arabic language proficiency and development. In order to do so, a spelling test was given to a mixed-gender group of students in order to respond to any presupposed assumptions regarding the negative impact of Arabizi on students' spelling skills.

The study reported on the correlation between the extensive practice of Arabizi and the poor performance of such students in their spelling of the Arabic language, while Al-Shaer also found a relationship between this poor performance and the students' Internet access and use. In Saudi Arabia, Bashraheel (2008) also reported on the variant stances towards Arabish that range between never employing it and being a 'fun' practice that could be used in informal settings as a convenient mode for interaction, and the questions regarding its stability and whether such a practice could ever replace the Arabic language. One member, however, acknowledged the importance of Arabish and the need to consider generational fraction in Saudi Arabia (Ibid). Ghanem (2011) explored the use of Arabizi among young Saudis, who found such a practice more convenient for self-expression since they believed that Arabic is a difficult language to form.[18]

[18] http://www.arabnews.com/node/374897

Nevertheless, in her article Ghanem cites some of these users' preference for employing Arabizi solely in the online sphere in order to protect their Arabic competency.

In 2013, Al-Ghabiri presented the contrasting views of Arabish reported by different Saudis; for instance, while a Saudi English teacher noted the significance of Arabish in promoting English learning among girls in state schools, another Arabic teacher rejected the practice due to its negative impact on young girls' ability to learn the Arabic language.[19] One IT expert related the practice of Arabish to the development of technology and the introduction of the BBM service in Saudi Arabia, with a significant member of the educational field believing that such a practice was unjustifiable and calling for a greater role for teachers in limiting this phenomenon (Ibid). However, some of these stated studies (Bashraheel, 2008; Ghanem, 2011; Al-Ghabiri, 2013; Al-Shaer, 2016) were not based on empirical work and thus can only provide limited insight into Saudi perceptions of the practice, where these views vary according to each member's attributes to the language. The conclusive knowledge from these limited reports is that while some may find Arabish to be a method for self-expression that can promote language learning, others report a negative view of Arabish which is primarily motivated by fears over its impact on the Arabic language.

Correlating to the significant emphasis on standard language ideology, such as in the aforementioned studies on how to promote language learning, neglects and dismisses the students' linguistic ability, in other words, dysgraphia. These studies ignore the possibility that some students may possess poor writing skills in comparison to others, and places the blame squarely on the shoulders of new media and online practices. From a scientific perspective, Purcell *et al*. (2011) assert the importance of considering and understanding the mental and cognitive processes in relation to writing ability. This has been defined in relation to dysgraphia, which according to Mayes *et al*. (2017) is a condition that leads to problems with handwriting in a manner that can prevent students' educational accomplishment and ultimate success. Although this study does not consider this cognitive aspect, digital media and educational scholars should examine students' ability to communicate via writing or spoken discourse in relation to this cognitive process, as opposed to citing the impact of technology. For Mayes *et al*. (2017), the belief that handwriting skills can be improved through teacher input and raining does not have concrete ground and thus students with such a condition tend to suffer over time. In order to understand the status of Arabish in Saudi Arabia, and in particular as seen by the nine study participants from Riyadh city, the circumstantial language ideology and public discourse in the society must be analysed. Bearing in mind that language ideology differs from one online forum to another (see for example, Lenihan, 2011), and critiques of young linguistic choices are anecdotally based on exaggerated fears over the native language and morals (Thurlow, 2006; Herring, 2008; Wang and Edwards, 2016), standardisation is a significant principle in promoting the sustained attacks against the employment of these online non-standardised linguistic varieties.

[19] http://www.arabnews.com/news/448776

'Language ideologies account for the patterns of language use and justify the interests of societally powerful groups' through the notion of 'a single variety [being] endowed with the status of a standard and becom[ing] a benchmark for the assessment of other, non-standard, varieties' (Ferenčík, n.d., p.86).[20] Milroy (2001) further discusses the meaning and aims of the standardisation notion and approaches to sustaining this 'common sense' of a language in the society. One particular ideology exists in respect to a language, whereby elements such as 'correctness' 'uniformity', prestige', and 'idealisation' all come into play in order to assign the standard language in opposition to other non-standard varieties that may be contained within this language. As such, a high cultural value is associated to the standard language, while others who do not know or attempt to produce other varieties might be viewed as outsiders of their cultural group (Ibid). As Milroy (2007) notes, this process defines that authoritative groups or members are the policy makers of social legitimisation and the preservers of certain linguistic practices as the standard norms. Consequently, these policy makers would assign a negative connotation to newly emergent non-standardised forms of communication such as Arabish, or other practices as reported in the aforementioned studies. In other words, this standard ideology of a language can be problematic in relation to its disregard for and questioning of variations from the norm, which contributively raise the notion of language guarding (Ibid).

Safeguarding includes the threats from both non-standardised spoken forms and the discursive online practices such as orthography utilised for non-standardised forms of communication. One attempt can be seen in the Arab world, where proposals in Egypt in the 1800s and again in the 1900s called for the substitution of the Arabic script with that of its Latin counterpart, with Arabic being considered unequal to the task of modern communication (Muhammed *et al.*, 2011; Allehaiby, 2013). The first proposal was advocated by Wilhelm Spitta in 1880 and Karl Vollars in 1890, both of whom were directors of the Egyptian National Library. They both advocated the belief that the 'Arabic writing system' needed to be reformed or replaced, with the view that the Romanised form would be adequate (Allehaiby, 2013). This proposal, however, was strongly rejected, and thus in the late 1990s another proposal appeared (Ibid). The second proposal, however, had a religious agenda and motive, whereby the Coptic Christian Salama Mosa felt the need to replace the Arabic script, being primarily motivated by the notion of the Arabic language being the language of Islam (Ibid). Mosa's argument was based on the failure of the Arabic language in the scientific field and in conveying and presenting such information. Since his claim was not constructed on scientific evidence, and particularly given the significant contributions of the Arabs 'during the Islamic Golden Age', such a proposal was rejected (Ibid).

While in Saudi Arabia no such proposals have ever been forwarded, the recent shifts in language and digital behaviours constituting the practice of a spoken form of a particular language were seen as an 'elaboration of vernacular writing', as opposed to attacking the impact of new media and digital forums

[20] https://www.pulib.sk/web/kniznica/elpub/dokument/Ferencik4/subor/Ferencik.pdf

on Arabic (Androutsopoulos, 2011). Language standardisation activists, particularly in the context of digital practices, are actually neglecting the underlying factors of a constructed communication that speaks more to the interactive purpose, social groups and formal versus informal interaction. Androutsopoulos's perception is that rather than perceiving such a change in the language as being the impact from new media, we should regard this shift in respect to the new 'strategies' or practices being employed, which thus leads to such a change. In addition, these new strategies should be viewed as a consequence or outcome in association with the unfolding social changes. Meanwhile, other studies contradict the excessively pessimistic view of young media practices and report positive outcomes for these users, including the manner in which these spaces help to maintain social relationships (see for example, Wang and Edwards, 2016). Therefore, attitudes in online and offline spaces were found to be similar (Tyler, 2002). Since the claim of preserving the native standard language and the pessimistic view of technology can thus be said to be exaggerated, in this study it is argued that the practices of young Saudis in IM forums are associated with the sociocultural transmission within the country and their non-standardised practices, namely, that Arabish is a strategy that allows the users to express their social stance and needs.

If we follow Androutsopoulos's (2011) argument that new media spaces facilitate the 'elaboration of vernacular writing', then in the Saudi Arabian context this enables the sociocultural conditions of society and inference about existing ideologies to be indexed. Therefore, in considering the language ideology in Saudi Arabia in order to address the different attributes towards Arabish, two points are considered. First, the manner in which different kinds of authority including social, religious and educational institutions participate in reproducing and sustaining a particular view of the language; for example, through books, coursework and subjects students will accumulate this cultural view towards the language and thus be able to identify the correct linguistic forms (Milroy, 2001). Second, there is the public discourse, which is primarily influenced by the Saudi public ideological discourse in respect to the Arabic and English languages, besides the standardisation that can extend to other forms in social life such as practices and morals also being taking into account. As such, and according to Androutsopoulos (2011), consideration of the examination of Arabish in this context requires a further conceptualisation rather than the constricted view of 'language change'. Therefore, in critically analysing the nine Saudi participants' metadiscourse and practices of Arabish in informal IM interactions, this study rejects the narrow linguistic vision of these discursive linguistic practices and thus applies a dynamic relevance between public language and religion streams, heterogenic social classes and the status of English being the language of the Elite. The following section henceforth aims to present the legitimate analysis of the implicit political, religious and social power in constructing a public discourse that is accurately said to be a dual discourse primarily monitored by two powerful groups in Saudi Arabia: The Elite and renowned respected religious figures. However, more surprisingly, with the first concerted rejection of new technology in Saudi Arabia due to the resulting tension found in more conservative societies (Nydell, 2012), new media is employed in Saudi Arabia to sustain its public ideologies. Despite the attached fear of the consequences of new media, such as in spreading western culture, concepts, freedoms or causing a rejection of social rigidity, as well as its negative impact on Islamic values, social norms and the Arabic language, new media was perceived positively within the context of accomplishing certain agendas.

2.4 Saudi public discourse

In similarity to Vaisman's (2014) study of online gender identity performance in online spaces that are constructed in relation to the broader gender discourse, the study of Arabish in this respect accounts for a similar experience between Saudi public discourse and online practices. With this in mind, the current study argues that Arabish users' practices in the context of informal IM exchanges can be linked to the public discourse of different social classes, elitism, language ideology and public narrations of Saudis' inhabited roles. The introduction of this study addresses the social structure of Saudi Arabia (see chapter 1) assisting in the discussion of how the public discourse in Saudi Arabia operates and manifests. Notwithstanding that Saudis were initially sceptical and rejected the introduction of new media such as television, mobile phones and the Internet, the later acceptance of such media has had an impact on the national social structure mechanisms (Kraidy, 2006). To understand Saudi public discourse, more importantly, is to assert that it is based on contradictory and complex opposing discursive beliefs, dichotomies and streams. However, the use of discourse in this study refers 'to a broad conglomeration of linguistic and nonlinguistic social practices and ideological assumptions that together construct power or racism' (Schiffrin *et al.*, 2001, p.1), due to the defining of discourse as a concept varying between contexts, and across different fields. This appraised definition, moreover, extends to the manner in which such a discourse contributes to the control of the mind (Van Dijk, 2001), and thus belief systems and practices are grounded in socially accepted or rejected norms. Therefore, the use of public discourse in this thesis is intended to refer to the complex communications of a particular culture, including those fears and issues that have a significant impact on the members of such a culture (Cap, 2016), namely that the clustering of right and wrong in Saudi society depends upon the individual's social position, class, and education, which are eventually moulded by the public discourse.

Additionally, these positions are not socially paralysed or matched due to Saudi public discourse itself being aggregating by divergent strategies, opposing ideologies and discursive practices. In Gal's (2006) understanding of the public, and as seen in this study, public discourse defines what people 'read' and 'hear', which they then 'circulate' accordingly. To elaborate, people tend to discuss public discourse, exploring social incidents and classifying them as either acceptable or not based on a set of norms or discourse situated for their culture. One controversial example is how Saudis discuss the religious police, and in reading about their responsibilities, people thus circulate such knowledge in different manners, being supportive, opposed to or rejecting their practices. However, all these stances are discussed in respect to the public discourse, stating their responsibilities and power. Moreover, a fraction within Saudi society is the existent tension between the country's need to evolve economically through interacting with foreigners of different regions, languages and religion, and the sociocultural structure of society that rejects opposing cultures (Kraidy, 2006). Inevitably, this tension leads to the creation of different stances by Saudis, particularly among young educated members, liberals and religious figures. Therefore, Saudi public discourse can be understood based on two dominant streams: the religious group, who significantly coordinate the sustaining of Islamic discourse among Saudis; and the Elite, who call for social evolution and reform. As such, Saudi Arabia adheres to a strict form of Sharia law in both the private and public spheres, with this religious significance originating from the birth of Islam within the nation, and thus the country is considered to represent the axis of all Muslims around the world (The Report, 2007).

Despite the KSA constituting both religious groups – the Sunni, comprising the majority of Saudis, and the Shia, a minority of the national population – all acknowledge its sacred position because of the existence of the Holy Mosques in Mecca and Al-Madina. As such, religious figures tend to hold a prominent role in Saudi society and are generally critical of any demonstration of Western values or practices in public life, for example, in relation to the styles of dress and behaviour. It is important to note that despite the history of this group extending back 1,400 years (Noman, 2014),[21] the socio-influential power of the religious police can be seen in the extent of their practices in the new media and digital world. The digital sphere, in fact, supports this religious stream to enact certain principles and beliefs in a manner that serves multiple political, religious and social objectives; for example, the establishment of a Twitter group named @ksa12300 to support the religious police and its authority. Delegitimising actions constitute different 'acts' such as 'negative actions', 'blaming', 'excluding', morality and morality crisis, belligerence to other groups, streams and 'rationality' (Cap, 2016, p.3). This can be observed in the actions of religious figures, who attack libertarian thinking and assign negative connotation to their actions, claiming that such liberal attitudes are incompatible with religions and Islamic morality. Therefore, the aim is to establish and maintain a common and shared agreement of values, while preserving these classifications from disturbance (Hearn, 1998; Cap, 2016). Nevertheless, it should be noted that what is referred to as the religious police and some of their figures is not representative of the fundamental Islam principles, which call for social tolerance and acceptance. The aim here is to explain how this group manifested their role under the umbrella of Islam, which in many cases proved to be distinct from the moderate religion. Despite the KSA government's recent condemnation of this religious group that calls for extremism, this subject falls beyond the concerns of the current study.

The intention is to address the power of these religious groups and their ideologies once the study has been conducted, since it affected the perceptions of the nine participants. Therefore, this aspect is discussed in the conclusion chapter. Returning to this religious stream, it aims to purposively sustain hegemony through fighting against other existing streams within society that may contradict the former's religious claims and certain views. This extends to the blocking of many online sites and accounts, such as those that call for liberalism, or that highlight the need for social entertainment that does not fall within the Islamic traditions of the religious stream. Accordingly, in terms of celebrating the Saudi National Day, a campaign unfolded that criticised the inclusion of music and gender mixing, besides a strong rejection of the principle of public celebration in general (Noman, 2014).[22] In this respect, Noman concludes that this religious stream's aims and works dominate public life in a pervasive manner, reinforcing the conservative society while maintaining control of the religious hegemony. Meanwhile, elements from the religious milieu exploit the opportunities that arise through the Internet to impose their strength and influence while suppressing and challenging civic rights from being expressed both digitally and physically through the

[21] https://medium.com/internet-monitor-2014-public-discourse/the-use-of-the-internet-to-enforce-religious-hegemony-in-saudi-arabia-a8c907a7bf82

[22] Ibid.

enforcement of their role as monitors and moderators of activities in the cultural, political and social domains that may be personal or collective.

Another significant example of this religious discourse within the context of new media and digital practices is reported in Kraidy's (2006) study of public discourse in Saudi Arabia, regarding the Arabic version of a well-known televised reality show: Star Academy.[23] The study reveals that many Saudis actually reject such programmes, citing the conflict with Islamic norms, for example, through promoting dancing, singing and gender mixing. This led to the creation of a website named No2StarAcademy.net, which although no longer accessible, through the establishment of its content that according to Kraidy contained restricted religious Fatwas, claims and notions challenging the show suggest the amplification of this perspective in Saudi public discourse. However, contradicting stances may exist within this group, in which many Saudi families who have forbidden their children from participating in this particular show are themselves viewers of the programme. According to Kraidy (2006), the reality show was widely viewed by Saudis of different gender, age and background. To understand these opposing stances in the complex society, it is argued that this conflict and duality within Saudi society extends to online and media practices. It is thus claimed that the social, sociocultural and religious structure of Saudi society has been conducted in a similar manner to the online spaces. Despite some Saudis presenting different practices online to those in public, such a contradiction reflects the complexity and duality of the actual society. According to Perlov and Guzansky (2014), the 'conservative, radical forces, religious clerics, and mouthpieces for the regime' constitute the majority of Saudi social network users.[24] Their aim is thus to disseminate common beliefs and behaviours to the public through utilising these networks for particular purposes. This further extends to the prominent national debate regarding gender segregation, with a huge emphasis on Saudi women's roles and status within the society, a point that is addressed in the following section.

2.4.1 Saudi gender discourse

Although this study only reflects to a limited extent upon gender issues in Saudi Arabia, particularly discussed in chapter the methodology chapter, new media such as that related to online spaces have enabled some agency for Saudi women; for example, in terms of social and communicative interactions with male and female Saudis, and non-Saudi individuals. Comprehending the mechanisms of gender separation in Saudi Arabia will assist in conceptualising the social power of the existent ideology, including gender. Moaddel (2006) and Le Renard (2008) discuss the gender segregation in Saudi Arabia, which according to Le Renard (2008) is not necessarily the case in every public space, since although

[23] Star Academy is a reality talent show that features contestants from throughout the Arab world who compete to win the title of 'Star': https://www.lbcgroup.tv/star-academy-en.

[24] http://www.inss.org.il/publication/the-social-media-discourse-in-saudi-arabia-the-conservative-and-radical-camps-are-the-dominant-voices/

some public spaces permit the existence of both genders, albeit without public interactions, namely those of unrelated familiar connections, other spaces forbid such gender interactions; for instance, dual gendered workplaces are structured based on certain norms that accommodate the social and religious structure in Saudi Arabia through strict segregation. The public discussion of gender roles places a strong emphasis on Saudi women, in a manner whereby Saudi women's image represents a religious and cultural icon of the country (Doumato, 1999), or as Le Renard (2008) asserts, women have been deemed as a particular 'category'. The existence of new media spaces and their affordance for gender interactions accordingly contradicts the current regime in the domain of gender segregation, and thus apprehension concerning the repercussions of publicly revealing their practices moderates the contestants' physical interactions. Meanwhile, those women who are also involved in this complicated social, cultural and religious space feel the tension in society, and particularly educated women, besides other female Saudi students who have lived or still live in Western countries (Perlov and Guzansky, 2014). Sakr (2008) conducted a three-year study exploring the public discourse in Saudi, where she reports that within the field of public media such as newspapers, radio and television programmes there was evidence of some Saudi women being employed in these fields. Their jobs, however, were restricted to performing certain roles such as presenting news on the televised state channel in accordance with Islamic principles by wearing a gown and the *hijab*.

Sakr (2008) further reports that even with such conservative appearance, these women struggle to thrive in the environment due to the prevalence of gender discrimination, where promotions only consider male employees in the same field. The tension here can be underscored in the contradictions between how the government strives to emphasise women's roles in society, and the social resistance to such measures from religious bases; for example, in terms of permitted activities and behaviours, women's physical appearance in public, and the covering or revealing of their faces. On the other hand, the second main stream existent in Saudi Arabia can be viewed through the manner in which other intellectual groups fight against the rigidity of this religious stream, while arguing that such a stream has the tendency to merge rigid traditions with the religion. As such, these groups of intellectuals also utilise online spaces for their purposes and to disseminate their beliefs (Noman, 2014).[25] On that basis, social resistance similarly contributed to the introduction of the first undergraduate course in Mass Communication for Saudi females for example, which according to Sakr (2008) was first introduced by King Abdul-Aziz University in 2005. More recently, Saudi women are becoming more visible in different fields as the government assigns educated females to a range of educational, political and economic domains. Consequently, it could be claimed that the media plays a cooperative role in shifting social tolerance and acceptance of women's social and public image; for example, Saudi women's public practices through the media in the establishment of the Women2Drive campaign (Perlov and Guzansky, 2014). This campaign began when Manal al-Sharif recorded videos of herself driving and posted them in different online forums such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and others to challenge the ban on women driving. Furthermore, the Facebook page for this campaign presents other themes associated with Saudi women, such as the issue

[25] https://medium.com/internet-monitor-2014-public-discourse/the-use-of-the-internet-to-enforce-religious-hegemony-in-saudi-arabia-a8c907a7bf82

of male guardianship and domestic violence.[26] Therefore, the significance of new media's impact on the mechanisms of Saudi public discourse cannot be ignored.

This relates, moreover, to the rigid structure present in Saudi society, whereby public entertainment spaces such as cinemas, theatres and other such social domains do not currently exist. As Perlov and Guzansky (2014) note, this has contributed to the success of social networks and the spread of new media in Saudi Arabia, since many Saudis do not go out in public, and is highlighted by Saudis being the most frequent users of both Twitter and YouTube in comparison to other users around the world (Ibid). Consequently, language ideology does not escape the discussed social tension, with Cap (2016) arguing that this type of social power extends through legitimisation of the language used through 'setting agendas' (Ibid) to achieve their purposive social hegemony and acceptability of particular linguistic norms and practices. The religious figures' linguistic performance in online sites emphasises virtuous versus immoral language, and is intended to spread fear of rejecting their religious agendas. There are two stances towards the Arabic and English languages, and their use in public or private contexts in different communicative fields, a point discussed in the following section.

2.4.2 Saudi language ideology and anti-Arabish

To start with, a website called *Islam Question and Answer* is supervised by renowned religious figures in Saudi Arabia, and discusses the virtues of the Arabic language. The site's principal purpose is to respond to religious queries proposed by different individuals from around the world. On this site in 2011, a reader queried the theological acceptability of refusing to teach Arabic. As such, the question illustrates not only the significance of Arabic, but also the relative potency attached to it as a sacred language.[27] Therefore, studying and teaching the language is seen to afford significant religious rewards; for example, the dissemination of the knowledge of Islam in general, and the Quran in particular. On the other hand, the site condemns those who eschew the teaching of Arabic unless they have good cause, since it is believed that they will forgo the opportunities that such teaching affords, and from a religious perspective the rewards it confers. Other online religious websites such as *Islamweb* (2011) also establish Sharia rules in relation to different aspects of people's lives; for example, in Fatwa no. 31707 the site allows the studying of the English language under certain conditions in non-Muslim schools, with the necessary conditions being that the learner has to be assured that his/her learning in such institutions will not negatively impact his/her Islamic morals and beliefs in any way, while the learning of English must be in the service of Islam and for the dissemination of foreign sciences in the Arab world.[28] It is important to consider the language employed in these websites, since the metalanguage significantly targets certain audiences and thus imputes to the sustaining of this language ideology. These audiences underpin such a stream through the high demands of these Islamic sites, owing to the broader admiration of the religious discourse (Kraidy, 2006), and thus the circulation principle of discourse as proposed by Gal (2006) can be noted in terms of how Saudis circulate this public discourse, which supports the shift of religious beliefs into other

[26] https://www.facebook.com/Women2Drive

[27] https://islamqa.info/en/161844

[28] http://fatwa.islamweb.net/emainpage/index.php?page=showfatwa&Option=FatwaId&Id=31707

spaces. Meanwhile, such religious individuals believe in their superior cultural qualities as they read the Holy Quran with greater frequency and depth, and therefore perceive to have a greater connection to God's word, or in other words they possess higher cultural capital. The hegemony of this religious discourse is expressed in what Van Dijk (2001) refers to as social 'proponents' or context, including the space, the social and educational norms, communicative discourses, social positions and beliefs.

The legitimisation of this group stems from the voices of those who follow and consistently support these sites, thus sustaining the social power of the religious members. In this type of narration, discourse and written context, people rely on cognitive 'structures' (Cap, 2016), whereby they accumulate knowledge in relation to the situated norms, and thus through acting people recall their knowledge (Bourdieu, 1986). However, it is important to argue that the interoperations of the Quran and understanding of Islamic values dependently vary based on the background and education of its interpreters (Kraidy, 2006). The interpretations we are referring to in this respect are not in relation to the basic Islamic rules and beliefs, but rather in terms of the misinterpretation of some Quranic verses by some Saudi members, which may result in violence and hostility towards other cultures and religions. Therefore, this reflects the abuse of social power by some authoritative figures, who tend to employ certain genres such as religiosity in their verbal and written productions in order to reject the practice of the English language. On the other hand, there are the Elite Saudis, who support the use of English for various professional, social and interactive purposes, as has been noted in section (1.6). However, permission to take any action must be sanctioned by their superiors, who typically hail from the Elite class, which possess the social power to access and control various resources within the space (Van Dijk, 2001). Discourse such as the Saudi public discourse of language ideology is hence influenced by this stream that is opposed to the religious discourse.

In opposition to the rigid religious discourse, intellectual Saudis call for a religious reformation within the Islamic beliefs (Lacroix, 2004), since in light of the emerging needs of these educated members, the social structure is deemed to require renovation. It is important to note, however, that these intellectual members are not necessarily Elite members, and rather the legitimisation or rejection of their social requirement are conditioned by the Elite's decisions. Furthermore, in Saudi society there is a third stance towards the different ideologies of language that can primarily be seen in the disputed attitudes of some families; for example, being supportive of the Arabic language by displaying rejection towards English in public. Meanwhile, such families or members tend to manifest opposing practices to their public adherences by either employing English lexis in their private interactions or through attempting to learn the language outside of the context of formal schooling. Such contradictions are underpinned by two primary perspectives. First, within these particular families, the children or the younger generation may, in many cases, have a different appreciation and experience of English to that of the older generation. This extends not only to their mastery of the language, but also to the extent that Western concepts and beliefs have influenced them, particularly in relation to fashion, music and how they socially interact. Second, it is important to note that since Saudi Arabia is a very conservative society, the attitudes and behaviour of these individuals in private can differ markedly to those evident in public. Similarly, we may find that other Saudi families place considerable value on English language attainment, with their domestic, educational and social lives largely reflective of Western values, albeit that in public they adopt a very different demeanour and are notably more conservative in outlook, appearance and approach. Therefore,

the controversy surrounding language ideologies within Saudi society largely mirrors the divide between traditional religion and liberal generations; for example, the Arabish and anti-Arabish groups. Arabish is viewed controversially within the KSA itself and its use has elicited a range of reactions and responses; those most vehemently opposed to the practice shall be termed *anti-Arabish*.

This range of responses is reflected in the media, where there have been calls for a revival of the use of Arabic across all social contexts, including the online sphere. An example of this can be seen on Twitter, where an Arabic group called 'Taghreedat' has been established primarily by Arabic translators and writers from a number of countries across the Arab world in order to promote the use of Arabic within the digital domain. In her post on the Common Sense Advisory website, which contains a conversation with this Taghreedat group, Hegde (2013) notes that the group was founded in May 2011, and that it aims to increase the use of Arabic and to improve the quality of that usage more generally across the digital domain.[29] The group argues that this will be accomplished primarily through the translation of digital content into Arabic, particularly for Twitter users, and that this will motivate these users to utilise Arabic more frequently. In the context of Arabish, Allehaiby (2013) sets out the arguments of the anti-Arabish group. The first is the fear that using the Latin script will have a negative impact on the learning of Arabic and on cultural vitality, while the second relates to religion, in that as Morrow and Castleton (2011) as well as Badry (2011) note, much of Arabic's importance globally derives from its use as the language of the Quran and in its identification with Arab Muslims. For the former, Ghanem (2011) and Al-Shaer (2016) report that with the use of Arabizi comes fears over the future of the Arabic language; a fear that has been addressed by some Saudi Arabish users, teachers and parents. This concern is related to the belief that such a practice can weaken Arabic and might even replace the language at some future point; thus, there is a call to preserve and protect the Arabic language (Ibid).

Moreover, the importance of such a language derives from its significance in the Islamic world in general (including non-Arab Muslims), in the same way that Latin was historically important in churches. Additionally, in a survey carried out by Muhammed *et al.* (2011) amongst young Arab Facebook users, despite 82% of these users supporting the use of Arabish, 17% of the young respondents rejected such a practice. This fear of technology or new media impacting on the language and morality of youth has been thoroughly reported in various studies such as Thurlow (2003, 2006), who examines the statements and encounters that appeared in various corpus and media referring to 'language use' in terms of reporting the impact of technology on the language and morals of the younger generation. Thurlow's findings were striking in respect to the exaggeration and misinterpretation of young practices, with such concerns in many cases built upon illegitimate claims. As such, this fear over the Arabic language, namely that classic Arabic does not present convincingly in the context that Saudis do not use this language in social, physical and virtual communication. Furthermore, in media modern Arabic is primarily employed, and if we

[29] http://www.commonsenseadvisory.com/Default.aspx?Contenttype=ArticleDetAD&tabID=63&Aid=5545&moduleId=390

consider Milroy's (2001) argument that high cultural value is associated with the standard language, classic Arabish is not widely employed nor practised. Normally, it is the religious figures that tend to employ such a classic form due to their knowledge of the Quran and the consistent recitation. In fact, this can be traced back to the general public discourse that existed traditionally, particularly in terms of the introduction of the Internet. The concern was primarily focused on the assumed negative impact on society, including religious values, which was well documented in the print media (Teitelbaum, 2002); for example, in 1998 a columnist in Al-Yawm opined that "[s]ince you have agreed to adopt this civilization's instruments, including its factories, its weapons, and its computers, then you are forced to adopt its ideas and values" (Ibid, p.224).

Another example is when Abdallah bin Abd al-Muhsin al-Turki, a well-known figure who supports the religious views rejected 'a paper on globalization' and strongly criticised the introduction of the Internet to Saudi Arabia, claiming its limited sensitivity towards religious values and thus promotion of Western traditions could percolate into the society (Ibid, p.224). Nevertheless, despite such strong views concerning the language and religious traditions English is a highly appreciated language, with many Saudis regardless of other capital attempting to include some English words or phrases in their spoken discourse, depending on the member's linguistic and cultural capital. This study considers the forum of informal IM interaction that occurred among the nine Arabish-using participants to be a mirror of the physical F2F setting, and while Thurlow (2006) points towards a disregard of the 'stylistic diversity' that can take place in the study of the context of IM, this study accounts for the diversity in accordance to the users' social groups, close ties and status. Rather than focusing solely on the affordance of these online spaces to accommodate Saudi Arabish users' needs, the study explores how such 'stylistic diversity' pragmatically enables the shared views and positions of the users' social group. With these social ties and relationships, the playfulness of the young users in terms of the linguistic conventions for certain communication, and in particular the context, helps to sustain these relations (cf. Thurlow, 2003). Negative perceptions of the young's practices and communication have been a significant aspect illustrated through public discourse (Thurlow, 2005), since such emphasis is placed on criticising the younger generation, who in some cases might present practices in extension to their sociocultural physical conditions; for instance, there are fears over the dismissal of linguistic tools such as capitalisation, which can be absent within communication in the technology era (Thurlow, 2001). For example, although the Latinised alphabet is employed both online and offline in Serbia, besides the use of the Cyrillic language, there is concern over the language's status (Ivković, 2013). Therefore, this author's position as a Saudi scholar is to give voice to the practices of young Saudis not in presenting a subculture, but rather through expressing their own particular social views.

2.5 The field of Arabish IM

Moving on to the informal Arabish IM communication spaces, this study argues that such spaces mirror that within the F2F context. In order to understand how these Arabish users function within the informal interactions with friends and family members, it is important to first present the conceptualisation of the IM field. 'Field' as a term was introduced and defined by Bourdieu as 'a series of institutions, rules,

rituals, conventions, categories, designations, appointments and titles which constitute an objective hierarchy, and which produce and authorise certain discourses and activities' (Webb *et al*., 2002, p.21). This means the way in which each user brings his/her own background, beliefs, capitals and socioeconomic conditions (Mahar *et al*., 1990) to the field of IM. This, furthermore, has been defined as the habitus, which according to Bourdieu is 'a habitual or typical condition, state or appearance, particularly of the body' (Jenkins, 2002, p.74). The notion of habitus will be further addressed in a following section that discusses the user's self-identification within the IM field. Within a complex society such as Saudi Arabia these Arabish users can be influenced by its public ideologies and discourse, and social class can play a strong role in their perception of Arabish. With the increased use of English in the KSA (Mahboob and Elyas, 2014), these users' position, according to Blommaert (2015), are never neutral and they are always driven by certain interest and gains, for example, recognition and status. Although employing English for social interaction is not the norm in Saudi Arabia, this does not mean that such a practice fails to emerge within the social field. The engagement, however, is on the employment of the Latin orthographic system, where this choice should be examined within the social context of Saudi Arabia (see section 2.4). The question that arises as a result is to what extent Arabish users' values and status are seen in the discursive practices of the Arabish in IM spaces and the potential to measure such manifestation. Therefore, the presence of each Arabish user in this study has been called *telepresence* (Wood and Smith, 2010), while Suh and Chang (2006, p.100) refer to it as *being there*, whereby such a sense is deeply felt through the engagement with others that facilitates an examination of how Arabish users' self-representation and position mirrors that of the F2F context.

Ibrahim (2011, p.90) further defines this process of online existence as 'the degree to which consumers feel their existence in the virtual sphere', in which Arabish users' feel their presence in the field of IM exchanges, particularly those assisted by mobile phones and interaction with close social ties. The study, however, refers to this principle of online existence as the user's presence in IM spaces. Participants in this case probably employed the IM interaction to support and sustain already existing social relationships, and thus the IM field should be seen as an extension to the physical spaces rather than examining it in isolation from the physical conditions. It is, moreover, a 'mental state' of the users' feeling of their physical existence within online spaces (Draper *et al*., 1998, p.356). Some limitations, however, in the approach to addressing and measuring the user's presence in online settings, for instance, are associated to the lack of practical measurement that is based on empirical examination in order to signify what really affects the user's sense of presence and their impact on the user's performance (Draper *et al*., 1998). Another concern is that while physical spaces have boundaries for interactions, online spaces are 'delocalised', meaning that they are accessible to everyone (Ivkovic and Lotherington, 2009). Meanwhile, another difference is that new and innovative linguistic variations and practices are constructed online, while in physical spaces such creation might not be to the extent of the online context (Ibid). To overcome such limitation in respect to the study's regard of IM Arabish spaces as being similar and an extension to the physical settings in Saudi Arabia, we argue that 'vividity' and 'interactivity' (Wood and Smith, 2010) are uptaking in the vision of the Arabish users' presence. This constitutes both the deep online experiences of a user in order to arrive at a sense of his/her presence, and the ways and the extent to which a user

manages his/her online spaces to produce practices and evoke reactions. Vividity can be seen in the richness (Hopkins *et al*., 2004) of the informal IM settings of Arabish that allow its users to deeply experience the extension of their social ties, including sharing and agreed practices, which could be influenced by their social class and capital as well as the existent Saudi public discourse and language ideology.

An example of a rich experience is the 'high definition televisions' that can provide the watchers with a deeper experience compared to televisions with no such properties (Suh and Chang, 2006, p.101). In the context of interactivity, Mollen and Wilson (2010) claim that there is no agreed or specific definition of interactivity, since it varies form one scholar's perception to another. However, according to Suh and Chang (2006) this principle is how the user is able to change and shift his/her linguistic personation and even the topic discussed. This is mainly the user's conceptualisation of his/her presence and the extent to which Arabish in IM settings can be representative of such a taste. Another attempt by this study to overcome these physical versus online limitations is through acknowledging the extent of the participants' presence in presenting the physical features through symbols to enhance the richness of informal IM experiences, for example, the repetition of several characters, capitalisation, the employment of question and exclamation marks, and the use of emoticons. According to Crystal (2006), people tend to repeat letters to indicate tones or stress the importance of something in an online communicative context. This can also extend to question marks, which can emphasise the importance of the question addressed by the user or indicate the degree of surprise, as reported by Danet (2001, p.127), such as 'Arrrghhh ! ! !' or 'AAaaaaarrrrrrhhhh ! ! ! !'. Laughter is another significant element that was reported across the Arab world by Palfreyman and Al-Khalil (2007) and El-Essawi (2011) such as in the use of 'lol' and how it was manifested to additionally present the level of laughter. Moreover, IM spaces in smartphones in general provide many emoticons, which Kataoka (2003) defines as emotional signs and symbols that can encode and decode a particular emotional feeling. The use of these symbols is a means of self-interactivity as the Arabish user connects emotionally with another user on a personal level since interactions are private in the IM spaces, and thus adds to the richness of the participant's experience. The following section thus expands on this vision of the Arabish IM field, arguing that self-identification and presentation is based on the user's taste and capital (i.e. Bourdieu's habitus).

2.6 Self-identification

In order to examine the Arabish IM user's practice and perception of the practice, the study first needs to conceptualise its definition of the user's position within the IM field and adapt a practical framework for investigation. This section, therefore, commence with a definition of the term *self-identification*, drawing on Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) principle of positionality, where the user can make sense of his/her self in a particular space through taking a particular stance in which such instance is defined through Bourdieu's concept of habitus. According to Jenkins (2002), this habitus is the belief and value people hold in their lives and in respect to resources and profits, and which can thus generate visible dispositions and practices within their social context. Moreover, this habitus becomes active in a certain context or space (Mahar *et*

al., 1990), which Bourdieu identifies as the 'field'. With the discussed complexity of Saudi society structure, its public discourse and language ideologies, as well as the religious power and class fraction, the study thus required a more enhanced and complex framework to capture both the macro and micro perceptions and status of the Arabish employed among the Saudi participants. To start, self-identification has been classified by Joinson (2003) as the manner in which an individual presents him/herself to others, which constitutes the type of activity or production an individual decides to generate. Another definition is that identification is the placing of focus on the actors themselves, that is, the person engaged in the act in which they identify themselves and others (Brubaker, 2004). Brubaker states that this process embraces two distinct aspects: categorisation, which means the identification of others of similar and shared characteristics; and the relational, which describes the positioning of the self in relation to others.

Such a process can be further comprehended from the influenced of both internal and external factors. According to Brubaker, the internal aspect is where an individual enters into an internal dialogue to categorise his/her position within this relational context; the external factors come from institutions, which possess the social or political power to codify and determine social classifications. This, as such, influences the user's position and thus Bucholtz and Hall (2005) propose a functional approach in respect of positionality, that is, the position of the self in the social structure and the position of the self in relation to other agents within that structure. The functional approach asserts that the examination of the self in relation to the person's position depends on the settings available and the people with whom he/she engages. Consequently, self-identification should be seen as a process that works in both how we perceive ourselves as members within a certain social structure, and in what ways our perceptions of self influence our perception of others, whether they share similar or opposite positions within this given social structure. Habitus, in this respect influences the position a user takes and thus it is this individual's accumulation of cultural values, namely cultural capital, that constructs the habitus. Bourdieu's use of the term *capital* was to explain the maximisation of profit, which in this study refers to nonmaterialistic gains. This derives from the idea of the investment people make with regard to a particular production or practice within their social context in order to profit from it (Field, 2005). According to Bourdieu (1977), cultural capital is defined as those cultural values and knowledge that can be transferred from one generation to another based on the society's structural dynamics. Within such a capital, profit can be gained through various resources, which Bourdieu refers to as *cultural products* and which are constitutive of cultural, social, economic and symbolic profits. Such products can be manifested in different forms within the physical world such as language, practices, objects, appearance and many other representations.

In Belk's (2013) paper of the 'digital self', he suggests that with the 'impact of digitization' the examination of users should account for 'possessions', discrimination' and 'sharing'; in other words, linguistic properties, the discernment of class and IM conditions in allowing and facilitating further engagement and daily sharing among its Arabish users. For example, Facebook was seen to be a significant example in which its users share the wider aspects of their daily lives with their online friends

(Belk, 2013), regardless of whether such relationships already existed within the physical fields or not. This can exist within the informal IM spaces as Arabish users communicate with other users via pre-existing relationships in F2F fields. From a different perception Goode's (2010) study, for example, reported upon the 'technology identity' in which the user's skills, perceptions, beliefs in respect to technology and the ways he/she perceives its importance influence this particular identity. Sociologists furthermore, identify this self-identification process (see for example, Cerulo, 1997; Holland *et al*., 1998), and signify it on construction through 'interpersonal interactions' and manifested in actions and over a cultural and historical process since according to Baron (2008) new technologies and devices constitute an inseparable part of human life, where communication is no longer dependent on the physical existence of people. This study of Arabish in IM spaces, however, progresses to consider the sociocultural conditions of its users, including the class fractions existing in Saudi society and how the accumulation of certain class conditions, extending from the family, upbringing and education to the social group can influence this process. In order to conceptualise this positionality principle, Bourdieu's concept of habitus is adapted in this study as the main factor behind the individual's position within a social space, including the IM. As Sweetman (2009, p.493) asserts:

> *Habitus* refers to our overall orientation to or way of being in the world; our predisposed ways of thinking, acting and moving in and through the social environment that encompasses posture, demeanour, outlook, expectations and tastes.

In this respect, it is the way in which individuals or in Bourdieusian terms *agents* act and react within the social world. As it has been discussed in the previous sections that Arabish presents the style or taste of its user in respect to his/her choice of employing this practice in the IM settings, such a taste as such is resulted from the user's accumulation of his/her conditions and the related components (i.e. views, values, etc.). Given a complex society such as Saudi Arabia, Bourdieu's principle of habitus can add to the study, since this habitus produces a system of classifications (Weiss, 2008). As a result, such a system constitutes the appropriateness of certain objects, practices and symbols, which determines the manner with which users perceive, judge and evaluate themselves and others (Rahkonen, 2011). In Arabish, this can be regarded from two perspectives: first, the symbolic value of Arabish being produced in the Latin script (orthographic), which Bourdieu (1984) refers to as symbolic capital and according to Jenkins (2002) can be evident through both tangible and abstract forms such as paintings, art, music or language; second, the appropriateness of such a script for social connection with other users, which can be analysed in relation to this self-identification process, and the collectivity of the Arabish group, a point discussed in this chapter.

2.7 Collective group of Arabish

To begin, it could be argued that the value of using the Latin script is perhaps derived from the purposes to which it is put by its young Saudi users. Indeed, El-Essawi (2011) and Muhammed *et al*. (2011) find

that Arabish use in general is largely confined to the younger generations. In this respect, such young individuals appear to adopt the value attached to the Latin orthography, it being the script of the English language, and thus might transmit it into the IM fields to be utilised as an attempt to break with pre-existing communicative Saudi norms. This attempt at breaking with existing norms is in a predictable way, where first the Latin script is employed for certain communicative needs of these young users. Second, the predictability of this cleaving from established mores and practices is further evidence that Arabish is derived from a dialect employed by all Saudis. Therefore, in examining this collective group of Arabish, the study adapts the notion of social identification proposed in Tajfel (1981, 1982) and Tajfel and Turner's (1986) approach to social identification, as the analysis of Arabish IM users' identification as a group is based on the notion of membership, in which the user identifies him/herself in relation to his/her social group. Jenkins (2008) argues that identification is always social, in that a group can be identified through distinctive traits, views and attributes. This, according to Tajfel (1982), is what gives rise to a group's categorisation.

Therefore, self-recognition and esteem derive from social recognition of the group, with distinctiveness and differentiation two significant tools in the service of social group recognition (Brewer, 2009). It is these distinctive practices and characteristics that act as markers between one social group and another. For example, Zywica and Danowski (2008) reported that self-esteem and popularity in Facebook among young users is associated to the social group or 'friends' that exist within the same space. However, in examining the impact of interpersonal communication and the collective identification of intergroups on particular users' perceptions of their group interaction within the online field, Wang *et al.*'s (2009) study revealed contradictory results. As such, they conclude that the principle of being a member of the group or an outsider did not matter in the members' evaluation, and the main consideration was in the context of producing a 'likeable' practice or the actions of the group. In the context of employing the Latin orthography, for instance, while in the Greek context Greeklish is perceived to be a 'funny' and 'creative' practice (Tseliga, 2007), in the Arab world Arabish is deemed to be a 'cool' (El-Essawi, 2011; Muhammed *et al.*, 2011) and prestigious practice among young individuals (Palfreyman and Al-Khalil, 2007). In El-Essawi's (2011) study, 'cool' is also an identification that is associated with those who speak and communicate through English. Another study conducted by Palfreyman and Al-Khalil (2007) points out that such use enables individuals to reflect more social prestige among their peers. Membership in this respect was not a major aspect in fostering connection and communication among users within the online field in general. In respect of Arabish, the user's affiliation may be said to be derived from his/her Arabish group membership, a membership predicated on the practice of Arabish, the salient characteristic of the Arabish group. Moreover, the social judgment and evaluation of others, according to Krueger *et al.* (2005), is based on the way people perceive themselves as different from those who are being evaluated. In a different context Kalmus *et al.*'s (2009) study of Estonian students' online practices and Leppänen *et al.*'s (2009) examination of young Finns' online practices reveal that in the majority of cases young online

users are creative individuals within online spaces. In both studies, the young users tended to manipulate the online settings and structures for their own purposes in order to serve their needs.

This, according to Kalmus *et al.* (2009), is due to the format of online spaces, which tend to be less structured. The study of Arabish in the IM field, however, goes further in its conceptualisation of the Arabish collective identity, arguing that its practices confine a particular value for its users beyond the limited scoop of being only a creative, cool or funny young practice. Therefore, this study considers this position of young Arabish IM users' practices in relation to the counter-practices existing in IM such as Arabic or English, and how the sociocultural conditions of its users regardless of their different capitals and background all led to the choice of Arabish as their style for informal communication. It will also reflect on these young Saudi participants' perceptions of the manner in which social needs are met through Arabish, and investigate the extent to which the reproduction of these practices can be indicative of social acceptance among young Saudis. Another disposition of Arabish can be noted in relation to how its users identify their collective practice. This, in Bourdieusian classification is the manner in which the habitus manifests within a certain field, as it produces and reproduces particular perceptions, classification and evaluations of actions. Furthermore, since online spaces, including the one considered in this study, can be reflected to the F2F spaces (Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011), social networking in this context was found in Kobayashi's (2010) study to create a sense of social tolerance among users of online games, regardless of their different backgrounds. The process of networking and its beneficial commonality has been addressed in various studies (see for example, Portes, 2000; Burt, 2009; Field, 2008).

According to Danet and Herring (2007), online interaction indicates the sharing of traditions and social knowledge, and thus in the context of Arabish it is important to signify the manner in which certain knowledge and information can be transferred through social ties. Although Hardin (2006) points out that online spaces can facilitate interactions among different users and build connections, our regard of Arabish is in terms of IM among users of close social ties, and thus the aim is to investigate the ways in which these social ties were carried to the IM field through Arabish. However, this study of Arabish does not suggest the findings in Kobayashi's (2010) study, as in social tolerance being the norm in Saudi society, and thus in the informal IM field since we regard it to be an extension of the F2F spaces. The view of social tolerance can thus exist within a group of shared positions, practices and attributes, in which such tolerance and social connections a degree of social trust exists (Blanchard, 2004). From a scientific standpoint, a shared language is one of the 'cognitive dimension' (Huysman and Wulf, 2004, p.6), which can enhance trust among the group. As a result, the participants' self-identification is examined in relation to their perceptions of the collective group of Arabish, with reflections on Saudi social and cultural conditions. Therefore, to conceptualise these conditions it is important to address the mechanisms of social relations in the KSA, which can be seen within the principles of networking and social obligation (Coleman, 1988). Given the complex social structure of the Saudis, which is based on class fractions, these principles might appear to contradict the one already proposed in this chapter. In Saudi Arabia, and

particularly with reference to Riyadh being located in the central region, social ties and connections are one of its features, where members tend to know each other's despite the strength of their social ties. Since we regard IM spaces to be an extension to the F2F spaces (see section 2.5), the duality of Saudi social structure can be thus carried into the IM field and among the participants' interaction with friends and family members.

For example, what is to be said as a social obligation in informal communication and this influence on networking and social ties. Moreover, since the nine participants come from different backgrounds, as stated in the methodology section (Chapter 3), this study aims to determine whether such participants differ in their identification of their Arabish group or not. Another aspect which is considered is the question of social connections among group users, namely social class groups and how, as per Wood and Smith (2010), these connections enable users to interpret the social meaning and identification presented in these particular informal IM productions. The following section as a result discusses the existence of sub-groups within the Arabish IM users, drawing on Arabish's discursive practices that include the code-switching between English and Arabish.

2.8 Code-switching between Arabish and English

This section is devoted to examining the concept of code-switching (CS) in order to understand how such a concept can be applied. From a conceptual standpoint, CS has traditionally been defined as a switching between two or more languages or varieties of languages within the context of a conversation (Gumperz, 1982), in which perhaps multiple elements of these languages are used – that this conversation or discourse is in written form is of no matter; the definition is still applicable. As such, the English script is no longer exclusive to its origins (American and British), but rather the script is used internationally in presenting different forms that accommodate specific social purposes, for example in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, Greece and many other contexts. With the new developments in the field of technology, associated novel norms and practices emerge. The study accounts for the principle of CS to refer to the switch in two contexts: spoken interactions switching between Arabic and English, and the switch between Arabish and English in written contexts. One of the aims in this study is to examine CS from a sociolinguistic approach as opposed to exploring its syntactic and grammatical functions. Critical to the concept of CS is that speakers are essentially fluent in both languages, with social motivation of particular import in the relationship between CS, class and ethnicity. Indeed, CS might not merely represent a reflection or product of social situations, but rather informs and shapes these interactions.

To an extent, this view could be said to be echoed in the *Markedness Model* by Carol Myers-Scotton (1998), in which language users are held to be rational in their choice of languages, as an expression of their rights and obligations in respect of other participants in the conversation. Therefore, it is important to investigate the motivational reasons and contributive factors that lead to this switch by Arabish users;

for example, the habitus, cultural value of English, language ideology and the value of the English orthographic systems. Another point is that the choice of a certain communicative form, style, language or variety over another is motivated by both the belief that such a choice is a signifier of a certain group and a speaker's desire to obtain expected gains from his/her linguistic choice (Myers-Scotton, 1998). The assessment of CS in this context thus utilises a contextual consideration of the Arabish users and how these situations influence linguistic choices. According to Commisco Global (2016), although Arabic is officially the main language in the KSA, English is also a significant language as it is widely practised in different fields such as business and education.[30] However, the literature lacks the examination of English use among Saudi members of different classes with explicit consideration, because of the sensitivity of addressing social issues and topics in Saudi Arabia, and thus these individuals may employ English differently. English power (see for example, Crystal, 2003; Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011; El-Essawi, 2011), is not an innovative topic, whereby the possession of this linguistic capital can add to the individual's social status. Stewart (2013), articulates that those children who possess this high socioeconomic capital are more advantaged within both the educational and preschooling stages, whereby they accumulate greater capital from the early stages of educational engagement.

As has been noted, this is related to their social lifestyle such as travelling and studying abroad, since English competency is highly desirable in these cases. For example, Allehaiby (2013) presents an example of this CS between two Saudis interlocutors, and while she did not examine this feature in her study, a switch was evident within the Saudi context (see Appendix 2). Furthermore, in studying two mailing groups' communications in the Egyptian context, Aboelezz (2009) reports the switching of English Latinised Arabic and English, and finds out that such a switch is related to the English competence of the participants (see Appendix 3). The study also reported that some of the participants attributed their use of English to the technological limitations arising from the general level of support available for the use of the Arabic script. Similarly, Palfreyman and Al-Khalil's (2007) study reported on the use of English with Arabish among Emirati university students. This use, however, tended to encompass aspects of their academic lives rather than their social milieu.

In the Greek context, moreover, in evaluating the CS between employing the Greek-Cypriot dialect in Cyprus and English among Facebook users, Sophocleous and Themistocleous (2014) report that while the employment of the dialect is in order to reflect humour and informal interaction, English is used in more formal interactions. Therefore, this study calls for an exploration into the impact with respect to the language choice of Arabish users, not only as the discourse may speak to a desire for social approval through language convergence, but also in the case of Arabish this may be evidence of divergent speech in which linguistic variance and difference are employed to emphasise social distance and exclusivity in the informal IM fields. In keeping with the concept of rational choice, as per Myers-Scotton (1998) above, for Giles *et al*. (1991) the choice of certain communicative form or even a certain non-verbal action is a

[30] https://www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides/saudi-arabia-guide

way to either indicate the need for integration within the social group or as a matter of distinction from that group. Since, according to Sweetman (2009, p.493), the habitus is 'class-culture embodied', where a social agent adopts social structures within their objective conditions, this helps in our understanding of the manner in which habitus operates within the structure of IM, and thus CS is seen within this informal field. The argument here is not in relation to the collective group of Arabish and its social ties, but rather how the sub-groups within Arabish might exist and thus give rise to different discursive practices such as CS. Therefore, the following section discusses the rise of sub-groups within the broader Arabish group, arguing that these sub-groups speak to the Saudi social structure that nurtures class fractions and distinction.

2.9 Sub-groups of Arabish

To enhance the study's theoretical framework in order to examine further the micro-level of Arabish in the IM field, relying on the participants' stories, the metadiscourse of Arabish, ideology of language and the public discourse in Saudi Arabia, it is important to understand the ways in which the habitus function within these discursive practices (i.e. CS), and thus leads to the creation of sub-groups within the collective group of Arabish. One of the critiques of Bourdieu's habitus is addressed by Giroux (1983), who was critical of the disregard of resistance or rejection, particularly by disadvantages groups in a given space. He argues that the proposed cultural theory and structure of human activity leaves no room for agents' agency, as not all social groups would entail their acceptance of pre-supposed values or positions. 'Common sense', assumingly, is an alternative approach in which Giroux provides a radical pedagogy, where humans rely on their previous experiences, conditions and knowledge either to accommodate or reject and resist the structure. This is similar to what Giles *et al.* (1991, p.2) defined in respect to their perception of accommodation, which 'can function to index and achieve solidarity with or dissociation from a conversational partner reciprocally and dynamically'. Accommodation and dissociation can extend to different performances including behaviours, verbal and non-verbal activities. Despite such assumption, the disposition Bourdieu addresses is not a matter which suddenly occurs but rather, according to Weiss (2008), its origins lie within the formative years of the individual, where social class, values and perceptions are internalised within such a disposition and transmitted through social institutions such as the family, schools, friends and peers. Such values and perceptions are, moreover, internalised within the social structure of a given field.

Therefore, it is to be claimed that these Arabish users' habitus and their positions are in fact structured in the sense that they are influenced and structured based on the individual's social and cultural conditions, whereby such conditions are reflected within this disposition. In the context of CS, this study considers two aspects. First, CS may signify the mediation of the self within the structure of IM, in which Navarro (2006, p.16) confirms that habitus is not a fixed or rigid system but rather 'a durable set of dispositions that are formed, stored, recorded and exert influence to mould forms of human behaviour'. Dispositions within this collective group can further address Kobayashi's (2010) assumption of social tolerance and

social intergroup tolerance. According to Kobayashi, social tolerance is 'the extent to which one can tolerate others who have different opinions and values' (p.550). Therefore, the examination of Arabish considers the extent to which these existing dispositions influence the users' perceptions and evaluations of others within the collective group of IM; for example, the extent to which this CS can be seen in the ways the habitus operates as a 'mediating concept' 'between objective structures and practice' (Harker, 1990, p.101). Adapting such a stance in this study consequently entails the evaluation of how these Arabish IM users objectively evaluate the structure, the ability to apprehend objective classified practices and the ability to classify and appropriate these practices. According to Jenkins (2002), it is the belief and value people hold in their lives and in respect to resources and profits, which can thus generate visible dispositions and practices within their social context.

Second, the use of English in the CS context can be constitutive of the cultural and social value attached to the language in Saudi society. In the context of language, Bourdieu (1991) argues that experiences, values and perceptions are all imported into a language and that the analysis of such a language should thus consider its *logic* and *rules of operation.* Language is a significant factor in every performance of cultural production (Jenkins, 2002).

Furthermore, Bourdieu's (1984) habitus is the reproduction of particular practices through disposition in a more homogenising manner. This is through the accumulation of historical and cultural values, which are not completely neutral (Rubtsova and Dowd, 2004), with agents not being seen as completely cognisant of all aspects of the power forces underlying the entire process (Swartz, 1997). Attitudes can be either for integration within existing individuals of a shared space or divergence from a particular practice (Giles *et al*., 1991). Therefore, the practice of English in F2F fields can be either to assert a certain position, for example, being a member of a group of English speakers, or to reflect a disposition from a group of Arabic speakers.

2.10 Summary

In this chapter, it was first asserted through a discussion on the public discourse in Saudi Arabia and its duality that the conservative society of Saudi Arabia is constitutive of two main opposed streams: religious and liberal. It is accepted that Arabic is the language of the Quran, and thus should be both respected and utilised, while there is also the need to maintain the Arabic identity by employing and communicating in the Arabic language, particularly since English has begun to spread through the country. On the other hand, different attempts have been made by educated and intellectual Saudis to reject the rigid traditions, and there is an expressed need for social and cultural reformation. It is this tension between the opposing streams that constructs the Saudi structure and its public discourse. The significance of such a discourse is evident in the manner in which it circulates within the structure and in different public spheres, and while some consider this public discourse, for example in terms of the religious ideology, in their public and private lives others only consider their public behaviour. This contradiction shows the power of

existing ideology that can be traced back in time and was saline for the debate regarding the introduction of the Internet. The fear of technology is primarily associated with significant religious concerns over Islamic values, traditions and morals, and consequently there has been strong rejection of its introduction. Language ideology is defined through two stances: Arabic being the language of Islam and the Saudi identity, and thus the use of other languages is discouraged; and online forms such as Arabish and English being the language of the elite and cultured Saudis.

The study, moreover, attempts to determine the cultural and social values upheld by Arabish users and the sociocultural conditions embodied within the Saudi structure, and which may shape its use. Therefore, the data collection and data analysis framework in Chapter 5 aims to reveal the manner in which Arabish users' discursive practices can be seen as presenting certain values, distinction and position within the virtual spaces. This is through the adaptation of the Bourdieusian notion of cultural capital, whereby the habitus encompasses how people act, position themselves, perform and think within their social worlds (Sweetman, 2009). These practices within the society may be attributable to its structure, which nourishes social obligation and expectation. The study thus adopts Coleman's (1988) principles of obligation and expectation, which can facilitate in the elucidation of the participants' practices in relation to social forces (see Chapter 3). As has been noted in Chapter 1 (section 1.5), the research aims to respond to the following research questions:

- *To what extent are Arabish users aware of the mooted differences and linguistic properties relating to their use of Arabish? And to what extent do they see these as emerging conventions?*

- *In what ways does Arabish function in the field of online written communications as a social practice in Saudi society?*

- *In what ways does the use of Arabish give rise to associated perceptions and user self-identification, and in what ways does it influence the evaluation of other non-Arabish online users?*

The aim of this study is to examine the Arabish practice in Saudi Arabia, and in order to answer these proposed research questions certain data were required and collected through semi-structured interviews with nine participants, who all belong to families from the central region and live in Riyadh, while at the same time belonging to different social classes. The data collection also included nine Arabish documents, provided by the participants and constituting their personal online interactions utilising the WhatsApp feature or BBM available on their mobile phones. The collection and analysis of this data considered four main themes: Arabish presenting the practice of young Saudis, the English language and the sociocultural value of Arabish, the positionality of the practice and its users within the virtual spaces, and emergent Arabish conventions.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the methodology applied in this study, commencing by providing the researcher's epistemological and philosophical stance in section 3.1. This is then followed by a discussion of the critical discourse analysis applied for data collection and analysis in section 3.2. The researcher's positionality is addressed in section 3.3. The sampling process, including the presupposed sampling and small sample challenges are presented in section 3.4, as well as its sub-sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2. Moving on to the data collection process in section 3.5, this comprises observation in section 3.5.1, the Arabish written examples in section 3.5.2 and the interviews in section 3.5.3., with section 3.5.4 demonstrating the piloting of the data collection process. The data analysis section 3.6 is followed, in which section 3.6.1 shows the tools for transcribing the data. Moreover, data translation is explained in section 3.6.2. In order to code the data content analysis, explained in section 3.7 is applied to frame the resulted codes. Finally, section 3.8 discusses the principle of trustworthiness and ethical consideration and limitation are all explained in sections 3.9 and 3.10.

3.2 The researcher's philosophical stance

Within the social sciences, the selection of a particular approach to conduct a study remains the subject of much debate (Jones, 2004; Bryman, 2012). This is due to the fact that a choice of methodology owes much to the nature of the research being conducted and the data to be examined (Silverman, 2001; Gray, 2009). The complexity of ethical contemplation in structuring the research design and the employed paradigms can represent a challenge for many researchers (Jacobson *et al.*, 2007). In order to unveil the reality of social practices and to achieve an informative perspective of the shaped knowledge of a particular social phenomenon, the researcher needs to select a suitable method for investigation. In Cohen *et al.* (2011), different approaches or assumptions were addressed by Burrell and Morgan (1979) in the examination of a social reality. One stance is ontological, which investigates the substance of a social practice; while another is the epistemological stance, which constitutes the examination of knowledge and the manner in which it is transferred and manifested into human action. These two stances inform the paradigms of different studies, and thus accompany the interpretive versus positivists models, for instance, since they influence the research structure, the investigation, the approach and the final results. While the interpretive method adopts the principle of constructing collective knowledge via the researcher and participants (Jacobson *et al.*, 2007), the positivist or scientific approach calls for the examination of the social world in relation to a set of rules or laws assimilated into the principles of natural science conventions (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p7). The interpretive approach in this respect places its focus primarily on the individuals' experiences, whereby these experiences form its foundation for analysis. Consideration

of the experiences will correspondingly ascribe to the impact of social factors such as age, class, education and economic condition. According to Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012, p.46) the interpretive approach treats its participants as 'active' 'agents' while accounting for the institutional influences, beliefs and norms in constructing the 'world' or context of these particular members.

For the purposes of this study, and in order to understand the participants' social world, the interpretive approach is applied in order to investigate and acquire insight into the manner in which such a world constructs its perception of Arabish. In considering the discursive practices of Arabish within a complex sociocultural structure such as Saudi Arabia, certain tools are required to capture the phenomenon in sufficient depth to enable analysis of the status of this practice among the nine Saudi participants. In opposition to the positive stance, the interpretive stance constitutes flexibility that generates different accounts and distinct visions, and in many cases, widens the researcher's lens of examination (Trauth and Jessup, 2000). It thus not only considers the collaborative meaning-making, but also addresses the construction of such a process within the theory proposed by the researcher (Schwartz- Shea and Yanow, 2012). Therefore, the study regards the routes through which these participants make sense of their practice and positions within the context of interaction, and the manner in which such accounts can be related to Saudi Arabia's sociocultural conditions, language ideology, religious norms and public discourse. According to Jones (2004, p.249), it is through human production such as verbal accounts that 'native hopes and fears' can be reflected and understood. Despite his association of the interpretive approach with the quest for the meaning behind phenomena in the field of psychology, Jones's account for meaning is similar to that being sought in this study. Through examination of the participants' verbal accounts of Arabish and their metadiscourse within the context of social class and capital, this study can shine a light on Arabish's social meaning and value as a young practice by acquiring the knowledge necessary to understand its users' social actions in a given culture. Additional and new information, over and above my initial assumptions, was attainable due to my insider position (see section 3.3).

The ability to observe, analyse and capture the participants' constructed meaning of the practice within the communicative discourse represents an advantage of the interpretive stance of this research (Trauth and Jessup, 2000, p.70). The subjective interpretation of the users' experience can be pertinent; hence, the users' conceptualisation with inferences regarding the complexity of Saudi society are accounted for. Therefore, this interpretive choice was motivated by a number of assumed benefits that could facilitate our understanding of the social realm of Arabish; for example, the construction of collective knowledge by the participants and myself, since we all belong to the same young group of Arabish users, and how such reality of the study phenomenon: namely the values, beliefs and interrelated voices. As human interaction and practice need to be highlighted and interpreted by investigators in relation to these human perceptions, meanings, knowledge and culture in order to initialise the analysis of knowledge and practice construction by the Arabish users in this study I accounted for the endeavoured positions and experiences of the nine participants in association with their socioeconomic and educational capital. This, moreover,

is attained through the trustworthiness as the interpretive stances emphasise this throughout the research process. In order to maintain trustworthiness, it was important to be able to access these participants' physical social spaces in more informal settings in order to conceptualise their social world and understand their positions and actions within the same space. Through the flexible nature of this interpretive paradigm it was possible to apply qualitative tools such as observation and interviews to broaden the construction of these participants' reality and in relation to the theories proposed in this study.

By explaining the interpretive activity as part of the qualitative methodology, Sinkovics and Alfoldi (2012, p.818) state that qualitative methods can be considered as 'a set of interpretive activities' that assist in the examination of both the reasons and the values behind any sort of activities, and that the researcher's main role within such 'activities' is to 'interpret' the examined data. Therefore, the reference to this interpretive approach is 'to indicate those strategies in sociology which interpret the meanings and actions of actors according to their own subjective frame of reference' (Williams, 2000, p.210). It is an anti-positivist attitude to construct epistemological assumptions where cultural consistency influences the construction of knowledge and vice versa, particularly in the context of Saudi Arabia. This is due to the sociocultural condition and structure, which can be regarded as being distinctive in comparison to other contexts since the different social classes could result in differing discursive practices and the duality of the public discourse. In the context of examining IM interactions various studies such as Grinter and Palen (2002) and Pooley (2017) adopt qualitative methods. As such, this study employs a qualitative methodology that can yield a rich and nuanced understanding of the project under examination (Naoum, 2007; Patton, 2015), particularly in comparison to the quantitative paradigm. In the context of digital studies, applying quantitative methods would fail to capture the purposes of this study and thus would only result in systematic results detached from the sociocultural context.

Distribution questionnaires or conducting a survey in respect to the use of IM is reported to lead to incomplete results in terms of lacking the metadiscourse of its users, their capitals, status and class (Nachbaur, 2003; Flanagin, 2005; Bryant *et al*., 2006). Such a limited approach would not inform us about the sociocultural mechanisms of constructing the value of the IM settings for these young members. A qualitative project enables the researcher to explore the issue in greater depth and to illuminate subtleties that might otherwise be lost. Moreover, in comparison with a quantitative approach where tools such as surveys and experiments are adopted (Donley, 2012), Doz (2011) underscores the flexibility of qualitative methods, which can serve to enrich the researched subject while considering others' inputs into the conceptualised theory. Considering qualitative methods such as the ones considered in this study, helped in the interpretation of social ideologies, views, values and practices, which can be informed and influenced by the sociocultural setting and norms. The flexibility of the selected approaches in this study, namely observation, Arabish written examples and interviews, is further discussed through this chapter. For example, although Nardi *et al.* (2000) employ an ethnographic approach to study professional and social needs, since the participants were experienced users of technology, which was found to elucidate further understanding of the value of IM fields, utilising a full ethnographic approach in the context of examining Arabish IM among Saudi users would prove to be a challenge from two perspectives. First, the intention in this study is to present informal Arabish IM exchanges among Saudis of close social ties, and

thus with the properties on IM in supporting its users' privacy, it is impossible to observe the one-to-one exchanges. Second, given the complexity of the Saudi society (see Chapter 2, section 2.4), it would prove challenging to remain for a long period of time within the same spaces as these participants interacting with their friends and family members.

In addition, the adaptation of this interpretive stance as the main paradigm with a consideration of discourse analysis (DA) facilitates our understanding of each user's social reality in relation to their social position, class, power and capital. DA is defined as the study of language in use (Schiffrin *et al*., 2001; Cheek, 2004) in order to examine how people, make sense of their language in relation to contextual factors, constituting approaches that range from pragmatic consideration (speech act theory and politeness theory), interactional sociolinguistics and conversational analysis to critical discourse analysis (CDA). According to Blommaert (2005), DA considers any linguistic event to be socially constructed, whereby it either empowers its producers or reflects their power. Despite DA being considered as a general term employed to investigate language in use, such an approach encompasses consideration of the context, namely its structure and the positionality of the members situated within. According to Bondarouk and Ruel (2004), DA evolves around the connection between written or spoken events and their context, in which the study of a particular phenomenon can be located in relevance to its texts, and vice versa. However, taking into account the Saudi context, as has been discussed in earlier chapters, social elitism and distinction play an influential role in its structure (Hertog, 2011), with power being documented to exist between classes, including the strata found among the Elite (Yamani, 2000).

CDA is applied as a means of framing the interpretive approach to the data. Different organisational entities create the set of values in Saudi Arabia, thus adopting a subjectivist perspective that serves to reveal the role of these social and educational bodies in coordinating the social space and reality of its individuals. Adopting a critical perspective of DA thus enables greater potential to capture and understand the manner in which elements such as class, structure, education, gender and capital, amongst others, contribute to the production of discourse (Blommaert, 2005; O'Halloran, 2011). Therefore, the adaptation and combination of different approaches such as observation, written examples and interviews as applied in this study will fulfil its purposes in terms of critically investigating the power relations and social injustice that exist among users of different classes. While the application of surveys would fail to capture the reality and conditions behind the use of Arabish and its status for the users, the tools applied in this study offer insight into the personal encounters of Arabish practice with consideration of the individuals' sociocultural ideology, family conditions and social group. As such, the following section discusses the application of CDA in this study, arguing that such an approach within the interpretive paradigm of this qualitative study furthers the analysis of the manner in which social distinction and networking can be manifested in the field of IM spaces, and particularly among close social ties.

3.3 Critical discourse analysis

The aim here is to examine 'how people, through the variability of language, represent various [realities] within [a] discursive context and [the] implications for knowledge production' (Adjei, 2013 p.4), as well as the manner in which power relations and the discourse are manifested in the language of choice and use. Consequently, this study applies CDA as its method in conceptualising and examining the data by following van Dijk's (2001) definition, which represents a 'type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context' (p.352). The main principle behind van Dijk's definition is to adopt a critical perspective in the examination of the context of written or spoken socialisation whereby power and social inequalities influence the construction of these socialisations, which Flowerdew (2008) argues will include hidden factors that might not be apparent through the application of other approaches.

Therefore, this study conceptualises the data with a critical perspective, examining the Arabish employed in IM fields as a 'social practice' (Fairclough, 1995); for example, those who use Arabish, its context, their capitals, class and status, alongside all those factors manifested within the context of Arabish that can be highly informed by Saudi public discourse and existent ideologies. It is this language and power relationships (Wodak, 2002) that the current research seeks to examine. Therefore, this study follows van Dijk (2001) in considering the macro and micro relations in Saudi Arabia in an attempt to bridge this gap through the examination of the following aspects:

- Social membership, in other words, social classes (language used, legitimate actions, shared beliefs and stances, similar position, all signify the individual's membership of a certain group)
- Institutions (social and educational organizations, where social groups belong to and the roles of such institutions in the accumulations of particular norms situated to each group. Thus, re-production of these norms by institutions and groups confirm and sustain their existence, in other words, cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977a)
- Situational context (the field of interaction, which constitutes [the] set of rules, norms, ideologies etc.)
- Combined cognition of the individual and society (cognitive mechanisms of the interactive relationships between the personal accumulated knowledge, lifestyle, taste, social structure, public discourse, ideologies, sociocultural conditions of discursive social groups or classes)

(van Dijk, 2001, p.353)

Since CDA deals with the social problems, the historical context, the mediation between public and power, social relationships, ideology and culture (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997), in this study it is applied as follows. First, it attempts to respond to the following questions: How do the Elite in general control the Saudi public discourse and language ideology discourse? Besides religious ideology, how do these ideologies manifest and contribute to the social fraction and class distinctions (van Dijk, 2001, p.355) in correlation with the social position and status of each participant? Therefore, the analysis is conducted in a descriptive manner, being critical of various sociocultural and historical conditions. Second, CS in both the contexts of switching between Arabic and English in F2F settings and between Arabish and English in the IM field are critically analysed in relation to each user's capital and through examining the participants' position within the discourse of observations and interviews, not only in relation to the

context's structure but furthermore to those individuals existing within the same context, including the researcher.

Third, although this study does not reflect upon the linguistic properties of the participants' narrations, it does consider the use of the lexicalised phrase '*you know*'. With Jacobson *et al*. (2007) highlighting that qualitative studies constitute the collective structure of knowledge via the researcher and participants, this study critically considers such a phrase, drawing on its function within the context and the manner in which the participants mediate their position and knowledge within the field of interactions. The last regard is in terms of the laughter manifested during the course of the interviews. Since this non-verbal unit can be initially understood in an interactive context (Auer, 1996), critical analysis of laughter is applied through investigating its deeper meanings via an ongoing analysis, and through reflection on the participants' discourses laughter may have functioned to disguise their embarrassment or stress. This is attributable to the discussion of sensitive topics such as social classes and the fear of being devaluated. Finally, it is important to underscore that the CDA approach is considered in the theoretical framework of this project, approaching and collecting the data, and the data analysis process. Meanwhile, in order to apply CDA, a systematic framework to the analysis is adopted, namely content analysis (CA), which is defined as a 'method that provides a systematic and objective means to make valid inferences from verbal, visual, or written data in order to describe and quantify specific phenomena' (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992, p.314). This CA (explained and presented later in this chapter) is applied in this study to facilitate the presentation of a broader systematic structure of the data as the main framework in order to organise the data into smaller unties and prepare it for the CDA.

3.4 Positionality

In social research, especially qualitative studies, it is essential to consider critical methods of research design and inquiry of the data handling, such as positionality. According to Ganga and Scott (2006), it is even prior to the investigation of data that positionality works as an effective tool for the initial design and data collection. According to this principle, the researchers' interpretivist position allows them to perform as social actors who should question the impact of their own beliefs and personal values on the way they collect and interpret data (Richardson, 2000; Tylor and Settelmaier, 2003). The significance of such interpretation is the capacity that it adds to the research to interpret according to the reality of socially constructed phenomena such as language, shared meaning and consciousness. In contemporary studies, the conceptualisation of positionality is investigated in terms of 'insider-ness' and 'outsider-ness' (Merriam *et al.*, 2001; Mohammad, 2001). Both theoretical positions allow the researcher to place her/himself within the constitutional elements of the research settings through which the research must be carried out. To Ganga and Scott (2006), these elements may include the cultural background, gender, religion, language and career. The depth of the researcher's relevance to these elements may particularly decide her/his position and the impact of this relationship on the research findings. This follows the theme of adopting an interpretive stance, which constitutes the understating of human practices with a more humanistic and sympathetic approach to underpin their personal experiences and values (Bryman, 2012).

In my research, I had the privilege of being both an ‘insider' and an ‘outsider' to the sample of participants. For the most dominant position, the ‘insider' perspective had an impact, as I am a Saudi Arabian female, who is currently an EFL instructor in King Saudi University for Health Sciences (KSAU-HS). As a Saudi national, speaking both English and Arabic languages enabled me to understand both the cultural background of the participants and the context of the study, which concentrates on the use of ‘Arabish' as a means of communication in social media and other means of textual communication. Additionally, being an Arabish user who has been employing the practice for a long period adds to my position as an ‘insider' investigator. This insider position advantages the research quality due to the accessibility of norms and cultural practices for the researcher, and thus could encounter special awareness of differences and divergent experiences (Brown, 2012). The trend for the use of ‘Arabish' is a contemporary one used by generations of many young Arab adults, including Saudi males and females. Having all the participants in the age range of 20 to 30 years helped in bonding better with them since I am within the same age range. Such factors are crucial in my understanding as a researcher of the purpose of the textual approach used and its varying semantics that includes the cultural references, connotations, and clues. Moreover, understanding of the Saudi conservative culture enabled me to pick appropriate methods of interviewing with the candidates. Since the sample included male participants, meeting with them proved a challenge as this is restricted by the laws of the country and even deemed as unacceptable by the majority of the social classes in the Saudi Arabian community. Therefore, finding an appropriate group of male participants who matched my criteria of data investigation was not easy, this is further explained in the limitation section in this chapter.

On the other hand, being an ‘insider' (i.e. a Saudi Arabish user) had its own disadvantages when conducting the interviews. This led some of the participants to assume my preknowledge of the practice, and therefore that there was no need to provide extra information. Their frequent use of statements such as ‘you know' was either to assert my knowledge of the practice, to confirm our shared position as Arabish users or to seek my approval of the information they provided. Different intentions varied from one participant to another, depending on the context and the ways that a participant perceived herself/himself. Furthermore, class distinction was not only a potential influence in regard to their self-perception, but it provoked the curiosity of some participants who wished to know my perception of them. I dealt with such a situation in one context where I required them to provide further explanation rather than me being the filler of the uncompleted accounts, while on another I did not reflect any personal perception to the user. As an outsider, I had to face the limitation of my study caused by gender-conflict attitude, as explained in the limitation section. Following Milner (2007. P. 388), who provides a useful framework to overcome the ‘dangers seen, unseen, and foreseen in conducting research’, I personally considered different aspects in this study. Milner identifies these aspects through the researcher’s reflections in relation to the self and others, the presentation and interpretation of such reflection and consideration of others' voices and the engagement of social ‘system’ or structure.

Although his framework is explained in the context of race, colour and culture, its application in investigating Arabish is a significant one. Initially, the researcher needs to research himself/herself in respect to his/her own beliefs and perceptions of the studied subject; for example, by identifying my self-culture and social class, and their influence on constructing my vision of the social world of Arabish. Clarifications of the researcher's positions such as my presupposed assumptions, beliefs and motivational factors that result in the need to collect certain knowledge of Arabish, all required the negotiation of the researcher's stance in relation to others in a later stage. Lately, I have begun linking this self-reflection to the experience of participants and my consideration of the existent distinctive and contradicted positions, self-identifications and values between the participants and me, and among the participants themselves. Reflection on the social Saudi structure came within this consideration process, and interpretation of the participants' verbal and written utterances was fairly regarded. The consideration of the structure was also understood and respected in relation to the stated social limitation of meeting other genders in Saudi Arabia (see Chapter 5 section 5.7). It is believed that through this inner insight of the researcher and insights into others, she/he can investigate subjects such as culture and reach a nuanced understanding of the studied practices, knowledge and history (Milner, 2007).

It is through the help of my own experience of being a student at different educational institutions in the UK that I learnt not only to investigate others' perceptions, but also to respect differences and appreciate them. Coming from a country where authoritative figures such as investigators, teachers and many others may hinder some Saudi researchers' tolerance of others' opinions and knowledge, I was privileged to receive some of my education in the UK, which helped me in this study to maintain a fair judgment of the other Arabish users, particularly those of different class. Allowing them to be the 'knowledge makers' and construct a mutual and shared knowledge (Takacs, 2003) of the Arabish practice entails the analytical consideration of our voices as practitioners. Being an insider, I believe maximises my sociological knowledge of the practice and self-perception of the social realm of this research. In brief, my identity of being a Saudi female and Arabish user was the 'lens to simultaneously explore power and social relations' (Brown, 2012, p.30). How I perceive myself and why, presupposed assumptions and others' perceptions all contributed to the production of this research and its epistemology, where the following section briefly shows the design of this project.

3.5 Sampling

In respect to sampling, Gray (2009, p.176) underscores the significance of selecting the individuals or objects of examination in any given study. This study's selection criteria targeted nine Saudi individuals, each of whom were introduced to me through former colleagues. This process can be referred to as 'snowball sampling' (Loiselle *et al.*, 2010; King and Horrocks, 2010) or 'chain' sampling (Patton, 2002; Holloway and Wheeler, 2010), which means that potential participants can refer and recommend additional individuals who may be willing to participate in the study. In this case, former colleagues

recommended potential participants, who in turn proposed other potential interview candidates. Since this study targeted participants of both genders, this approach can be effective in the Saudi context, a society that is well known for its conservative social mores, particularly with respect to gender interaction. Given this social restriction, contacting male Saudi users can be challenging, which snowballing techniques may help to overcome. In addition, snowballing techniques can help in the establishment of a relationship between the researcher and the recommended participants that is founded in trust and which through the efforts of the referee or liaison is generally easier to form (Denscombe, 2010). The selection of the participants in this study was based on three criteria. First, the interviewed participants needed to be in the 20–30 year range, both male and female. The choice of this particular age range was due to the belief that Arabish is primarily utilised by young members, as evidenced in other studies (Palfreyman and Al-Khalil, 2007; El-Essawi, 2011).

Second, the participants should be from different educational backgrounds, which would thus assist in the determination of whether education or their knowledge of the English language influenced the participants' perception of Arabish. This aspect is also related to the third criterion, which considered selecting participants from different social backgrounds, as this could contribute to testing the assumption that social class influences and determines the choice for Arabish usage due to the assigned value of the English language, which has a stronger association with the higher social strata in Saudi Arabia and can reflect higher social status. However, it is important to note that these different social statuses were confirmed by the participants themselves, whom identified themselves in different social categories based on their socioeconomic conditions. My evaluation of their social conditions is based on different factors such as; their family names, education and houses as a result assessed their classifications. All the participants were members, originally from the Riyadh city, the capital of the KSA. The reasons behind selecting users from the same region were due to the dialectical variations in Saudi Arabia, which in some cases vary distinctively from each other. In addition, despite Saudis in general potentially being aware of and upholding similar sociocultural values in relation to their society, the significance of such values may also vary from one context to another depending on the particular social group. The last point is that since this study aims to signify and address a number of the linguistic aspects of the Arabish practice, it would be legitimate with such a selective sample to explore the variation, if any, within their production of the same dialect. This would assist in providing an extensive overview of this closed group. Finally, it should be noted that while these participants were not known to me personally, all were identified as users of Arabish (see Appendix 4 for further details of participants).

3.5.1 Presupposed sampling

In the context of social classes, as has been noted in Chapter 1 (section 1.6), it was intended to investigate and address the practice of eight participants, where two members came from the same class category. For instance, the first category supposed to contain two participants from the first class of the Saudi elite

(established elite), represented by particular members of the royal family, upper-class members and certain high status religious families and figures. The second category was also supposed to comprise two participants from the second class of the elite, that is, other members of the royal family who are not necessarily first cousins of King Abdul-Aziz, well-known upper-middle-class families, certain religious figures and some well-known members of the Saudi professions and businessmen. These two categories are known to possess social and economic power in Saudi Arabia, and particularly the established elite group, which as discussed above tends to largely influence the structure of society.

The third category was also planned to target two participants from the middle class, a class possessing fewer economic resources. Despite this class resulting from economic development, progress that has led to change in Saudi societal structure, it is pertinent to include participants from this class. It is generally the case that members of this class also have an acute appreciation of the value of English, evidenced in their motivation to send their children to study in lesser known private schools or institutions in order to learn the English language (see section 1.6). For the purposes of this study, the inclusion of this class can help to determine whether such individuals place the same high value on English as members of the elite class, and whether this accordingly contributes to their choice and use of Arabish. Furthermore, it should be possible to determine whether such middle class use of Arabish conveys a certain image socially. The final category was intended to include two participants hailing from the working class in Saudi Arabia. The economic resources available to this class compare unfavourably with those of the other three classes, while their access to job opportunities and English language courses is generally held to be limited. The children of this class typically attend state schools, where the teaching of English is often sporadic and of poor quality. Hence, any consideration of this class would enable me to identify those factors that underpin their choice for engaging with Arabish, and whether the value they attach to English has influenced, in turn, their use of Arabish.

3.5.2 Small sampling challenges

In the field of social research, Bryman (2012) confirms that different issues may emerge while conducting a study, and thus it is the researcher's responsibility to consider and overcome these challenges. In this study, two main challenges were faced in respect of sampling: first, the difficulty of encouraging Saudis to participate in research, particularly one of this design that involves the conducting of observation and interviews. Accessing and establishing connections with examined individuals is important to qualitative studies (Le Dantec and Fox, 2015), and gaining access to these particular nine Saudis as such required time and effort to allow their identification, and then establishing a sense of rapport. However, the rapport was initiated not through any random introduction but rather through gatekeepers, who were known to me and referred the participants due to the existing relationship of collegial trust or friendship with the author. Moreover, social challenges manifested when attempting to connect with male Arabish users, even if they were willing to participate, since the author is a female researcher. King and Horrocks (2010)

highlighted this issue, since many researchers may encounter challenges in accessing and reaching out to particular participants. For example, having identified two potential participants from this working class, they suddenly withdrew from the study one week later without providing any specific reasons for this. Moreover, communication with these particular members, for example, working class was not a smooth process in comparison to engaging with the members of other the classes. Therefore, since it was proving particularly difficult to reach out to other working-class users and to engage more participants, a change was required, with the sample of this study eventually targeting nine participants as opposed to eight: three users from the established elite group (EEG), three from the elite upper-middle-class group (EG) and the last three interviewees from the middle-class group (MCG).

Such a change can occur during the course of the study without imposing a negative impact on the study design (King and Horrocks, 2010), while of course it is important to remain aware of the need to minimise emergent challenges and locate appropriate substitutions. I thus believed that through the choice of an equal number of participants from each social group, this can facilitate in achieving a nuanced understanding of the practice, and to some extent, allow for a moderate generalisation among these three groups. The balancing of studied settings, individuals or groupings such as the consistency of a sample can aid in the formation of a robust analysis and discussion in order to arrive at an understanding of the studied phenomenon (Payne and Williams, 2005). Moreover, in respect to selecting an exclusive number of participants, Bryman (2012) argues that such a purposive sample meets the needs and research questions of a study. Meanwhile, Bryman underscores that researchers must remain mindful that with this sampling approach, generalisation is impossible. As such, it is believed that through the methods applied in this study and the time spent with these participants, a considerable body of data would be gathered despite the social barriers. Therefore, the aim of this study of Arabish IM in informal fields does not include generalising the findings to the wider Saudi population, but rather it seeks to examine the nine participants' evaluation and perceptions of their practices in depth and in association with their capitals, backgrounds and social class. One of the disadvantages of a small sample of this nature can be where the comparison is between groups that are not readily compatible; for example, if the comparison were to be made between Saudi Arabish and English online users. Therefore, in qualitative studies, the sample selection should be 'based on [the] expected reasonable coverage of the phenomenon given the purpose of the study and stakeholder interests' (Patton, 2002, p.246). Although some researchers, such as Sim and Wright (2000), noted the lack of evidence to either confirm or refute the notion that a small sample is inconsequential in the field of research, the researcher should pay careful attention to his/her sample categorisation. In respect to sampling diversity, this should be treated and chosen sensibly in order to elicit a range of differing views and opinions while striking an appropriate balance with respect to shared characteristics.

Creswell (2013) contends that the extent of the diversity within a sample should not be such that it risks eroding the possibility of identifying shared concepts, experiences and values. Therefore, to address such

a limited volume of data, the focus of this study is not to provide comparison between Arabish and other forms of practice, but rather it is concerned with drawing comparison of the different positions and dispositions of the nine users as individuals, groups and sub-groups. This is similar to what Payne and Williams (2005) advocate in order to overcome the issue of making generalisations; a common aspect within the field of qualitative and empirical studies. In essence, it is 'ultimately a matter of judgment and experience in evaluating the quality of the information collected against the uses to which it will be put, the particular research method and purposeful sampling strategy employed, and the research product intended' (Sandelowski, 1995, p.179). Therefore, through initially providing a detailed description of the data both the researcher and the reader will be able to arrive at a reasonable assessment of the findings. Then, following the belief that the selected sample can facilitate the teasing out and exploration of novel notions and perspectives that might otherwise have eluded the researcher (Flick, 2007; Keegan, 2009; Denscombe, 2010), the study's parameters should facilitate a more in-depth and nuanced understanding of social practices (Dörnyei, 2007). Following Gravetter and Forzano's (2012) approach, addressing the attendant disadvantages of such a sample size is to offer a comprehensive description of the data collected, such as illustrating the participants' age, gender and profession, together with the manner in which the participants were approached. In addition, the variety among these young groups, who all fall within the same age category or context, is important in conducting a qualitative project (King and Horrocks, 2010). Therefore, despite being unable to shed light on working-class Arabish users, the focus was shifted to identify similar and opposed characteristics across the three groups considered in this study, and to examine the impact of different existing knowledge or proficiency of English on the choice of Arabish and language ideology.

The diversity here might even exist within one group of a shared class, or maybe one member of the middle class might share a similar position or view to another member, for instance from the elite group. Essentially, a balance must be struck as diverse experiences can and do contribute to more nuanced outcomes. Another challenge in terms of the considered data is the need for access, which was particularly the case in relation to the male Arabish users in general, with Seidman (2013) signifying the importance of access to allow research to be conducted. Such a challenge was primarily emphasised through the identification of potential middle-class users. Despite the initial recommendation of some male users by my former colleagues, such users were disinterested in participating in the study. Within Saudi Arabia, communication between different genders, particularly in relation to the field of research, could encounter social obstacles owing to the conservative nature of Saudi society; for example, interaction among different genders is forbidden in the public sphere (see Chapter 2, section 2.4.1). Nevertheless, it was possible to access two male users each from the EEG and EG, although this was only in the context of conducting interviews and did not extend to their observation. According to King and Horrocks (2010) and Patton (2015), research has to be sensitive and considerate to the context of the examined subject. Consequently, I accounted for the sensitivity of the Saudi society in the context of gender segregation and thus did not transgress accepted boundaries in this respect. Despite gender not being an examined facet

of this study, it could offer insight for future investigation within the field, particularly with the association of Saudi public discourse and class distinction. To conclude, the interpretive researcher needs to be cautious in presenting generalised results due to the size of the sample, where in many cases qualitative research considers its subjects from the micro level (Payne and Williams, 2005); therefore, generalisation is not applied in this study.

3.6 Data collection process

After identification of the potential participants and prior to the data collection stage, the interviewees were provided with information sheets, consent forms and a set of preparatory questions (see appendices 5, 6 and 7), where the information sheets described all the information necessary for the participation in the study. Participants were asked to sign a consent form prior to taking part in the interviews, as it was essential at this stage to gain their permission (Creswell, 2013) with respect to the observations, interviews and the online Arabish samples. Moreover, preparatory questions were distributed to these participants prior to the interviews, thus serving a priming function in allowing the participants to reflect on the questions in detail. These forms were distributed either by email or in person – again, this process will be explained in greater detail later in this chapter. The data were collected through three distinct phases. First, three observations were conducted from December 2013 to January 2014. During this phase and post-observation, it was possible to collect Arabish examples from one user of the established elite (Ahmed), two from the elite group (Nouf and Noura) and one of the middle-class members (Sara). This was followed by conducting interviews with the four Arabish users included in this particular phase, where the time gap between the observations and collecting the examples ranged from several days to one week. Furthermore, the period between collecting the Arabish examples and interviewing the participants was no longer than eight days; for example, Ahmed was interviewed four days after his Arabish example was collected.

This was followed by the second phase that ran in June 2014 where Amal, a user from the established elite, and Noor from the middle class were observed in a similar manner to that stated in the first phase, and their Arabish examples were collected. The time gap here was shorter: Amal's Arabish example was gathered days after observation, while Noor's was provided four days after her observation. Moreover, they were interviewed after the collection of the examples, within less than a week. The final phase took place from the end of August until the close of September 2014. During that period, the Arabish example was collected five days after Reem's (established elite) observation, with her interview conducted three days later; the middle-class user (Huda) provided her Arabish example two weeks after the observation, and she was interviewed one week post-collection of the example; while Saeed was interviewed ten days after collecting his Arabish example. The following sections explain the process of collecting these different data in detail.

3.6.1 Observation

One of the research tools employed in this study is observation, with the ability to observe, analyse and capture the participants' behaviours and interactions with their friends and family representing an advantage of the DA interpretive stance of this research (Trauth and Jessup, 2000, p.70) from a critical standpoint. The subjective interpretation of the users' experience can be pertinent; hence, the users' conceptualisation of their social space and their sense of the practice conditioned to such sociocultural conditions is accounted for. It is well known that observation is a significant tool that allows the researcher to observe individuals' actions, reactions and activities within a particular social space (Kawulich, 2005; Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2012); therefore, the selection of observation can be justified by enabling the researcher to comprehend and report on the subjects' manners and interactions (Gray, 2009). The aim in this study was to learn more about the users' background, social class and manners of physical interactions, including how they present themselves in terms of Bourdieu's (1984) lifestyle or taste, body movement, language used, possessions and social groups. Moreover, due to my Saudi membership, and my position as a young member and Arabish user (see section 3.3), similar social values are accessible to me. One simple example is knowing when to 'laugh' when a situation requires that, and to recognise what is intended to be 'funny', which only can be acquired through daily engagement with the examined culture (Bernard, 2006).

Seven social occasions were observed instead of nine, due to the cultural limitations of engaging with male Saudis for social purposes, with each occasion varying in duration from 2 to 4 hours. In respect to access to the field, several points should be noted. By access, I mean how I was able to gain access and contact the participants in this study. Various studies (e.g. Feldman *et al.*, 2003; Wanat, 2008) have emphasised the importance of access and permission within the field of research. In this respect, Johl and Renganathan (2010) reflect on two types of access, formal and informal, while for the former I adopted formality in establishing contacts, such as physical appearance as well as the outlook and language used, a more causal demeanour was adopted for the latter. In this study, my access to the fieldwork was in an informal manner that constituted causality from different aspects. Firstly, my contact with the former colleagues or gatekeepers, who referred the participants, was through informal text messages on WhatsApp and phone calls. This medium of contact allowed me to discuss my study and explain its significance, which helped in their identification of possible candidates for participation. Secondly, I was able to contact all the participants through informal messages via WhatsApp or text messages as this allowed me to present myself to them and introduce the study and its procedure. This all helped in establishing an initial rapport with the participants as we texted each other about social matters in a friendly manner. Third, Since I share the same culture as the participants, on each occasion I had to dress properly in a sophisticated manner. It is important to note that in Saudi Arabia dressing appropriately while visiting others does not mean formality or even changing the course of interaction with one another. Dressing up is merely the main custom in Saudi Arabia, particularly in this context.

While it might be a private sensitive matter to visit people's private homes in some communities, in Saudi Arabia inviting guests over is one of the society's social norms, regardless of the strength of the members' relationships. This is especially the case for females, as such gatherings enhance socialisation and connect

its members. In all cases, I was invited and moreover welcomed, feeling the warmth of being present on these different occasions that facilitated the data collection in a convenient atmosphere. It is important to note that each individual engaged in these social occasions was aware of my position as a researcher and the purpose behind my visits, and thus this resulted in overt observation. At the same time, they were aware that they were not taking part in the study or being evaluated, since the study aimed to examine only the seven involved participants, who were either the hostess of these gatherings or had been met in the linker's house. However, one of the concerns in the observation context is that the researcher's presence might affect the authenticity of the individuals' interactions (Oswald *et al*., 2014). Therefore, the documentation of notes was conducted after the conclusion of each visit, and were concerned with the social space, social groups, manners of interactions, languages used and the participant's self-presentation and position. The aim was not to interrupt the interactions by being observed taking notes, which might purposively have disturbed or modified behaviours and communications. With this in mind, the observations were not recorded since this would have raised ethical issues and affected both the neutrality of the engagements and the ability to establish a rapport with members existing within the same space.

Through observation it was possible to notice the participants' verbal and non-verbal expressions, which according to Schmuck (1997) help the researcher to capture the attitudes, feelings and attributes of the observants. Living within this group of Arabish users, who are not only Saudis in general but users from Riyadh city in particular, the shared culture, attitudes and values are familiar and thus advantaged my position as an observer. With the complex Saudi society and its cultural sensitivity, it would be impossible to exist with the participants for a long period of time, particularly in informal occasions. Therefore, Knoblauch (2005) and Bernard (2006) suggest the focus be placed in certain aspects due to the limited access to the field; for example, selection of the field, access, self-introduction if necessary, being prepared to answer questions from the observees, noting the field and any existing objects or features that could be of interest to a particular study (Knoblauch, 2005; Bernard, 2006). Furthermore, Taylor-Powell and Steele (1996) characterise observation as being either overt or covert. While overt observation involves observing members that are aware of the researcher's attention, covert indicates the notion of observing the participants in a clandestine manner. In this study, both approaches were interplayed during the observations, and while the participants were aware of my observation no notes were taken during the process, nor any tool presented for documenting the process. However, in both cases my role as a researcher was an active one.

In the context of observation, there are two additional types, namely participant and non-participant observations (Lofland *et al*., 2006; Parke and Griffiths, 2008). In the participant stance, the researcher engages with the examined participants in activities and discussion besides taking notes of what was observed. In non-participant observation, on the other hand, the researcher does not engage with the participants but rather exists within the same space of the subjects, taking note of their activities and reactions. In this study, I applied these two types of observation in different situations, depending on the circumstances involved. For instance, by being a participant I both engaged in and observed the interactions (Kawulich, 2012), mingling with the participants and their friends during informal social gatherings where they discussed different topics in relation to social interests and other topics. Meanwhile, non-participant observations were also conducted, where the participants and their friends engaged in

conversations that reflected their opinions, attitudes and principles. Moreover, this extended to my observation of the social spaces where these gatherings took place in order to reflect upon the participants' social class and capital.

Emotions, feelings and reactions towards the topics discussed were also observed in a non-participant manner in order to understand how members negotiated the meaning, knowledge and positions within each interaction. The aim behind this tool of observation is to understand the participants' concurring or opposing perceptions, which forms the social reality of the study subject, namely the values, beliefs and interrelated voices. It is important to note, however, that these gatherings did not feature any discussion of Arabish, since the aim was to avoid directly influencing the gatherings' discussion and socialisation. Another reason was that due to my familiarity with the Saudi cultural norms, proposing a discussion of Arabish might affect the establishment of rapport, and thus the aim was to maintain a similar position to the participants, that is, being a Saudi female who wished to discuss and engage in a range of social discussions such as travelling, shopping, food and social news. The only topic that existed in the gatherings of both the EEG and EG was in respect to well-known restaurants and cafés in London, a discussion that featured opinions of these places, their cuisine and the social conditions of the patrons of such establishments. Within these gatherings with the two elite groups a common agreement of their social taste was observed (see Bourdieu, 1984) in respect to their lifestyle, namely travelling abroad on several occasions per year and attending highly recognised restaurants. This further extended to their language during the gatherings, as a frequent switch between Arabic and English was noticed on various occasions, while there was strong agreement through the use of terms such as 'classy', 'amazing', 'good family' and 'London'. This is further classified later in this chapter and explored in the discussion chapter.

3.6.2 Arabish written examples

In addition to the data collected from the observations, this study presents and analyses a number of Arabish examples sourced from informal IM, such as the ones existent in smartphones. Collecting written examples can function in parallel with in-depth interviews (Mason, 2002; Gray, 2009; Johnson and Rowlands, 2012; Creswell, 2013), such as those employed in this study. It was thus requested prior to the interviews that the nine participants forward an example of their Arabish exchanges. Therefore, all while eight participants provided such examples that were captured from IM provided through the WhatsApp one participant provided an example captured from IM provided through the BBM service. In addition, one of the eight examples of WhatsApp messaging was between a participant and one of her family members, while all the remaining other examples either from WhatsApp or Blackberry were among friends and close social circles. The methods of collecting these examples were various, depending on each participant's convenience, and were collected either through WhatsApp or text messages. The aim here was to gather different examples from the participants, who all come from different social and educational backgrounds. The study of these examples can be fruitful in that different information can be garnered from these linguistic exchanges; for example, the interaction, motivation, perceptions and representations conveyed in addition to the personal and social factors which shape such interactions (Markham, 2004). However, the aim was not to examine these exchanges in isolation, but rather to utilise

these examples to support the participants' stories that unfolded during the observations and interviews; for example, in respect to the CS between Arabish and English in the examples in order to conceptualise the extent to which the participants' value of English and practice in the F2F settings was presented in their IM exchanges field.

The treatment of these examples addresses a 'social reality' (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004), in which a written context can be representative of certain actions, reactions and everyday cultural values, since this study treats the IM field of Arabish as an extension of the F2F spaces. Furthermore, following Bryman (2001), writers can be aware of their readers, and thus the construction of their discourses can be influenced to serve certain ends, and these Arabish examples thus helped to comprehend the manner in which they are constructed for their particular audience of friends or family members. It is important to address here that these informal IM of Arabish are not representative of the public and as such, the study does not claim that these examples are representative of all young Arabish users in Saudi. Another aspect is that these participants were asked to present one example of their interaction. The reasons behind requesting such a limited number, first, in accordance with the sociocultural conditions in Saudi, particularly in Riyadh city, presenting personal interactions within social circles to the public can be a highly sensitive matter. Being a Saudi member myself, who inhale from the same city as these members and aware of such conditions, requesting and getting one example from each participant was a reasonable request. The collected informal Arabish IM present short exchanges between the users. This can be complicated due to the technical limitations in capturing a phone screen, which only allow a limited amount of interaction to be captured, that is, the text present within the screen's borders. Therefore, in some cases the captured examples do not show the beginning or the end of the conversation. Second, the aim was to not apply any linguistic examination of these nine written Arabish examples, since the aim of this study is to examine the status of Arabish among these nine Saudis and to analyse associated perceptions to the practice instead of examining their linguistic production in depth.

It was therefore, hoped that reflecting upon these informal Arabish interaction, would help in highlighting shared or different practice of Arabish among the different social classes groups and to signify if members within each circle share similar or different attributes to other members within his/her group. Furthermore, these examples complement the data yielded from the participants during the interviews, where I was able to move iteratively between their encounters of Arabish and their written productions. Being viewed as an extension of the F2F settings, including conveying non-verbal emotions and feelings within an Arabish discourse, reveals whether these users share similar characteristics with other online users in general and is also addressed in this study through the examples. Third, these collected examples of Arabish in fact provide an overview of how Arabish in Saudi Arabia differs in general from the Arabish recognised in Egypt (Aboelezz, 2009). Since these examples are part of the wider social context (Patton, 2015) in Saudi Arabia, they can help to signify the differences between Arabish, supporting the future study of the dialect un Riyadh city in comparison to other regions. Accordingly, four main questions in relation to the

examples were devised for the participants to respond to during the interviews, which comprised of three main themes: the participants' awareness of the Arabish's properties, the extent to which the characteristics of this practice can be regarded as emergent conventions, and the extent to which CS is employed in their Arabish examples and why. These questions were posed after the data from the principal interview questions had been gathered. The four questions were supported by a number of follow-up questions (e.g. Can you elaborate on this? Can you provide an example?), with how and why questions were also posed. Although these four main questions might seem for some as direct, the aim was just to provide a guidance to the participants when talking about their Arabish experiences.

3.6.3 Interviews

Gray (2009, p.166) alludes to the range of methods employed when conducting an empirical study, inclusive of interviews, observations and document analysis amongst others. Engaging with any of these methods or the combination of them helps to facilitate investigation of the 'hypothesis' under examination, since such methods can provide insight into peoples' behaviours, feelings and attitudes in respect to their daily social world (Ibid). This study thus employs semi-structured interviews, with each participant being interviewed face-to-face for a duration of 30-40 minutes. All the interviews were audio-recorded, conducted in Arabic and then translated into English by myself. In respect to the locations of these interviews, this process was left to the participants' convenience in deciding the time of meeting, the manner and the space. This was due to the belief that interviews require a space that the participants need to be familiar with, while at the same time helping the studied members to engage with minimal disruption (Gill *et al.*, 2008, p.292). Interviewing the majority of the female participants was conducted either in their own homes or was arranged through meeting at the mutual linker's house, that is, the person who had connected me with the participant. I was fortunate in being able to meet the female participants prior to conducting the interviews, where I was invited into some of their or the linker's homes for an informal gathering, with other Saudi females also invited for the purpose of meeting. There was only one case with a female Saudi where I had to interviewed her at her work place (a private school) during her working hours due to her congested social schedule. This particular interview was no different than others carried out in the participants' houses in respect to its convenience. King and Horrocks (2010) stressed the importance of considering the physical spaces where interviews should be conducted, such as convenient locations that entail a lack of formality.

The fact that I was a female instructor interviewing male participants, in a society that lacks cross-gender interactions outside the closed family circles, made things uneasy at the beginning. Nevertheless, in spite of this I managed to overcome this communication apprehension by gaining the trust of my interviewees when I introduced myself, my profession and the aim of my study. This was through my awareness of the social approaches and norms in contacting male figures. According to Brown (2012), being an insider helps in establishing a respectful relationship between the researcher and participants. Therefore, both

male participants were interviewed at their workplace, the first at his father's private company and the second at a private company owned by the participant and several relatives. Both interviewees, moreover, were no different than the others female members as in all cases, the interviews were informal, friendly and respectful. Additionally, while in the field I followed several points in order to establish rapport with these members. I was able to connect emotionally and intellectually with these members, bearing in mind my neutral stance during the course of the data collection, in order to avoid affecting their views in any way. However, this did not hinder my personal engagement; for example, Gill *et al.* (2008, p.292) articulated that features such as 'body language', facial expression, 'smiling', showing interest and 'mak[ing] encouraging noises' can contribute by evoking responses and engagement. At the same time, Edwards and Holland (2013) added that listening should accompany these proposed features.

I considered all these aspects as constituting listening to the participants' stories, leading them when they stopped or got lost, using body language, and sounds. On many occasions I laughed with them, smiled, and encouraged them by producing interjections such as 'aha', 'hmm', 'mmm', among others. F2F interviews permit a greater degree of flexibility in that they facilitate the space for further elaboration in respect of personal opinions while evoking a range of different participant responses (Richards, 2009; Brinkmann, 2013; Patton, 2015; Roller and Lavrakas, 2015). According to James and Busher (2012, p.179), semi-structured interviews can be regarded as a 'site for the construction, interpretation, understanding, and representation of experience', while according to Brinkmann (2013) such interviews are commonly utilised and favoured in the field of social research. In this respect, these interviews can create a space for the production of personal narrative encounters in relation to Arabish and the participants' perceptions of their communicative discursive practices. As Flick (2006) states, the open-question format enables the researcher to explore the true extent of the participants' knowledge, which Seidman (2013) refers to as in-depth interviews. According to Seidman, such interviews facilitate greater depth while providing the interviewees with a suitable forum in which to divulge that knowledge. In this study, the format of the semi-structured interviews was designed to illuminate the examined principles and aspects in this study, while at the same time allowing the participants to answer the questions in their preferred sequence (Creswell, 2009); for instance, by shifting back and forth to answer different questions and address additional aspects.

As already noted in previous sections, since this study explores issues germane to Saudi society that may encroach on areas of cultural sensitivity (e.g. male and female interaction, social class and elitism), the F2F open interview structure facilitates the researcher's attempts to identify points worthy of additional consideration and exploration. This approach also enables the researcher to identify the participants' feelings and attitudes towards the questions posed (Postmus, 2013), and whether some may broach areas of undue sensitivity for certain participants. The interviews in this study comprised of two main aspects. First, the semi-structured interviews comprised of six general questions, whose purpose was to elicit the participants' insights into, as well as their experiences, views and opinions of Arabish. Auerbach and

Silverstein (2003) hold that from a research perspective, six questions can be regarded as being reasonably sufficient to enable the exploration and testing of a hypothesis, particularly in cases where these questions are designed to be flexible and thus allow for detailed responses. This study invested in the construction of these six questions and their structure, where according to Warren (2010) the construction of such structure affects and directs the data to be yielded during the study. As such, the interview questions were designed to embrace three main themes: Saudi concepts of Arabish; the extent to which self-identification, social class and elitism influence the use of Arabish; and the participants' awareness of the manner in which Arabish is produced.

The six interviews questions thus feature an open-end nature, whereby although they directed the conversation in a manner that fulfils the purposes of this study to investigate Arabish, such questions still accommodate the participants' elaboration (Cohen *et al*., 2011). The interviews consequently focused on the personal experiences of the Arabish practices, the personal and social meaning and value of being an Arabish user, the significance of social groups, elitism and emergent conventions. These main interview questions were supported by a series of follow-up questions such as: Can you elaborate? Can you explain or give examples? Supplementary questions can assist the interviewee in expanding on those points, which they may initially have addressed in only a shallow manner. Therefore, it is vital that the researcher devote sufficient time to designing and fashioning such follow-up questions, which enable the interviewees to explore the area of focus as comprehensively as possible (Phillips and Jorgensen, 2002). The second aspect involved a discussion of the online documents. Six main questions were drafted to provide the participants with sufficient scope to discuss their examples. As previously noted, this will provide additional insight into the participants' practices while allowing me to explore the extent to which they are cognisant of the manners in which Arabish is produced; for example, in relation to the CS, the employment of symbols and marks, the participants' concepts of their Arabish practices, and how this mode of communication can be produced and presented. Therefore, these questions were supported by the aforementioned follow-up questions, asking the participants to elaborate on their responses, explore certain aspects in greater depth and to provide additional examples.

In respect of the semi-structured interviews, however, some limitations do present. One limitation raised by Silverman (2001) in respect of passive participants is where individual interviews can be 'less lively' (Brinkmann, 2013) in comparison with group interviewing, for example. In this case of interviews, it is challenging to identify and determine whether active participation is superior in any way, since each personality type elicits different data and interpretations. Accordingly, the quality of the derived data is difficult to ascertain; the participants' reactions, interpretations and level of engagement with the interviewer may all vary to quite some considerable degree. Nevertheless, regardless of the extent of participation, the level of interaction and the nature of the reaction may all serve to inform the study findings. Each participant would furnish a different perspective, which in turn can enrich the study in numerous dimensions. Furthermore, since F2F semi-structured interviews require the physical existence of both interlocutors within the same space, this creates an opportunity for the researcher to gain deeper

insight into the participants' feelings and reactions (Brikmann, 2013). The possibility of encountering such passive participants, in this case, can be advantageous for the study. Moreover, Reynolds *et al*. (2011) state that the researcher should remain mindful of the potential that they may unintentionally influence the interviewee through a particular line of questioning or as a result of unidentified personal biases.

Consequently, I remained fully mindful of this limitation and strived to avoid influencing the participants' stances and views, allowing them to express their beliefs not only through their responses to the six main interview questions, but also by creating a space for them to further expand on their opinions in relation to this study. Therefore, the semi-structured interviews facilitated exploration of the social and cultural factors underpinning Arabish by delivering a measure of depth and complexity that might otherwise have been lacking. The only potential issue is the gender difference between the researcher and the sample targets. However, in Miller and Glassner's (2004) study the age and ethnicity difference between the researcher and participants proved to be beneficial in that it enriched the data, since the participants felt empowered to convey experiences which they knew differed from those of the researcher. The gender, social and educational background differences between myself and Saudi participants should thus elicit additional details and a more nuanced level of responses. Being a Saudi national myself, I am cognisant of the fact that Saudis are culturally inclined to elaborate on personal experiences when requested to. Moreover, with the diversity of the examined sample in this study, following the opinion of Miller and Glassner (2004) this can empower participants, since they may view these differences as investing their views and ideas with some measure of value. The following section extends the consideration of the interviews in this study by explaining how these six questions were developed through piloting the data.

3.6.4 Piloting the data

A pilot study entails the examination of a smaller preliminary version of the large-scale data collection of a particular study (Gregory, 2005), and should be carried out in order to generate guidance for the researcher in evaluating his or her research questions and proposed tools for eliciting responses. The purpose of conducting the pilot study was to verify and ensure the validity of the developed procedures, protocols and tools for the acquisition of the main data at a later stage (Lancaster *et al*., 2002), and thus Sampson (2004) signifies the importance of piloting in qualitative studies. This process can assist in evaluating the research methodology and allow space for the refinement of the process if necessary, prior to the larger scale gathering of data. Therefore, prior to the collection of the actual data, a 25-year-old Saudi woman from Riyadh, hailing from the EG class and holding a degree in business was interviewed. She was introduced through a former colleague, who arranged an initial meeting at her house in Riyadh in order to meet the potential participant and to provide an opportunity to engage with her in an informal setting. The following day, this person agreed to participate and accordingly, a copy of the preparatory questions, the information sheet and consent form were sent to her house, see the third section of this chapter for the ethical consideration. A few days later the participant responded with an agreed time and date to meet for the interview. A week later, I met the participant at her house where she signed the consent form and the interview was conducted. The only problem that arose was that I had requested that the

participant provide an example of her Arabish interaction and in this instance, however, the participant failed to present her example until the interview was actually underway. As a result, I had insufficient time to reflect upon the participant's production of this particular example. In order to avoid such an occurrence in respect of the main data collection phase, I asked and remind all the participants to provide the example prior to the actual interviews, a requirement which was also highlighted in the information sheet and consent form.

The pilot study was conducted in accordance with the data procedures detailed in this work. All the steps applied in the main study including approaching the nine participants, conducting the interviews, data collection and analyses were applied in the same manner and fashion as that in the pilot study. As has been addressed, and in relation to the Saudi societal conditions, access to participants could present a challenge to the researcher, such as attempting to engage with the participants in informal settings. This also extends to my position as a female researcher, where interactions with male figures are limited. The choice of piloting the data collection through one case in an authentic setting when considering the Saudi context is reasonable. Through this piloting phase, it was possible to identify any strengths and weaknesses to the method, which enabled reflection upon a number of practical aspects in the study, such as developing a method for the later participants' observations. The informal meeting with this EG user was less than one hour, since we met only for a brief informal conversation, although later in gatherings with the other main participants a longer period of time was spent with them in more dynamic settings, such as social gatherings where their friends or sisters were also present. It also enabled me to develop a suitable approach for communicating with the participants and for refining and amending where necessary the information sheet, consent form and interview questions. All these aspects were tested during the course of the pilot study; for example, through piloting the data it was possible to identify issues such as translation of the interviews since they were conducted in Arabic, where consideration of traditional terms and concepts that exist in Arabic, particularly among Saudis from Riyadh city, that arose during this pilot interview helped to develop a more robust system for the subsequent translation. As a consequence, assistance was sought from two colleagues at King Saud University for Medical Sciences in order to review the translations and ensure accuracy.

Taking into account what these terms precisely implied and their function within the discourse of interviews also helped to develop and enhance the theoretical framework in respect to the CS between Arabic and English during the interviews in order to conceptualise the sociocultural values, language ideologies and class distinctions. The stance taken by the user during the piloting process, being a member of the Elite, with English usage commonplace for her and its value being recognised by a large number of those in her social circle, facilitated improvements to the data analysis approach. Class distinction and social power were also documented during this piloting process, and thus discriminating views and categorisation towards the outer-groups were reflected. Furthermore, the quality of methods employed to capture this aspect was developed, for instance, through conceptualising the use of CS during the course

of the nine interviews since it was evident, and its function within a discourse in association to the participant's position. The negotiation of positions was aroused during this particular interview, as the participant attempted to engage me with her opinions in relation to Arabish, which might have been based on her assumption of our shared stances. This helped to develop the conceptualisation of class distinction and position within the field of interaction, taking into account later how the nine participants negotiated meanings and their class positions. It was also possible to develop more analytical framing in considering the data, such as the terms, phrases or even emotions that can signify the nine participants' position not only through the prism of class, but also individually and in association to the field of interviews.

3.7 Data analysis

This section presents consideration of the data together with the methods and techniques employed in analysing such data, while addressing some of the challenges and limitations faced throughout the process of analysis.

3.7.1 Data transcription

Du Bois *et al*. (1993) define data transcription as the act of writing down the spoken discourse produced by participants. To begin, since all the interviews were conducted in Arabic, the author transcribed all nine oral interviews into written form in Arabic. At the same time, every word or expression produced in English was preserved and presented with no linguistic correction of any form. This was in order to maintain the context insofar as possible in the same manner that it was verbally produced. During the transcription process, several aspects were considered. First, I dealt with each recorded interview individually and listened to each recording several times in order to identify any misunderstandings that occurred due to, for instance, mistakes in decoding or miscommunication. In dealing with raw data, Bryman (2012) addresses the need to account for possible mistakes that emerge during data collection which could affect the responses. Consideration of decoding mistakes was therefore addressed with great care in this study in order to avoid any mistakes in transcribing the data.

Second, every single utterance and sound produced in the nine recorded interviews was also registered first in Arabic, before the translation process was applied. This would help in overcoming any limitations that could impose themselves on the data transcription, as Drisko and Maschi (2016) note the possibility of losing some information during the process of writing, for instance, the tones and spoken patterns. To overcome such a limitation, O'Halloran (2011) and Kowal and O'Connell (2004) were followed, and thus a particular system of symbols was developed that registered the changing of tones, breath, silence, overlapping utterances and laughter. In respect to the written examples, Flick (2007) states that analysing documents has to begin with the content produced and the systematic process of interaction, rather than merely examining the interlocutors themselves. However, since each presented Arabish example

constitutes two interlocutors, where only one of them is a participant in this study, I was unable to investigate the rationales behind the other interlocutors' particular production. Therefore, the participants' production of Arabish and their perception of the other interlocutors' practices is considered within the same interaction, while each example was read line-by-line in order to identify the recurrent patterns and features employed for verbal and non-verbal interaction, and to make initial sense of their practice and CS where present.

3.7.2 Translating the data

The next step was to translate the transcribed data from Arabic into English, with the key issue here being that translation can comprise both the meaning and the value of the data produced in the original language. Therefore, the challenge was to suitably capture the cultural and linguistic ideological differences between the two languages (van Nes *et al*., 2010). As such, and insofar as possible, the authenticity of the data produced was maintained and several steps followed. First, since translation is a mode of data interpretation (van Nes *et al*., 2010), the meaning of the Arabic phrasings was interpreted and translated into English, while direct translation from Arabic was also employed where possible. Second, any English words or expressions produced by the participants were retained and presented with no linguistic corrections or changes made. Third, Dörnyei's (2007) suggestion for linguistic editing during the data analysis phase was followed, and thus since the interviews were conducted using a localised Saudi Arabic, certain necessary linguistic editing was applied as it is not always possible to identify a direct English equivalent for some Arabic terms. However, such linguistic editing was only to the extent that it avoided compromising the authenticity of the original text from my perspective as the researcher. To achieve this a clear and enhanced description of Saudi concepts and terms is provided (van Nes *et al*., 2010), and particularly those situated and employed by members from Riyadh with no equivalent meanings in the English language.

3.8 Content analysis

CA has been applied in different fields such as sociology, psychology communications, and examining cultural beliefs and social groups (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Neundrof, 2002), and was defined as a 'method that provides a systematic and objective means to make valid inferences from verbal, visual, or written data in order to describe and quantify specific phenomena' (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992, p.314). Through this, CA is an approach situated to analyse the 'content' of these forms of data to study various aspects of such communication (Pashakhanlou, 2017, p.3) and thus can be integrated within the analysis of interviews, transcripts and written examples (Schreier, 2012). It is important to note that CA was adopted in this study to organise and prepare the data for CDA. In order to justify the choice of CA for this qualitative study, several points need to be addressed. First, CA is utilised to describe the applied qualitative methods and processes (Schreier, 2012) in a constitutive field of human communication, where

the interpretations of spoken or written encounters are required (Lacy *et al*., 2015). Second, CA in general helps to establish the direction of a study from a particular direction (Schreier, 2012), such as this investigation's sociolinguistic approach to the examination of informal Arabish IM exchanges. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), CA can be applied in studies that are initiated based on a considered theory to examine a particular phenomenon, which in respect to this study involved the examination of Arabish IM interactions among different classes of Saudi users. Third, verbal encounters of the participants' perceptions as such require CA's systematic method of organisation, in which according to Downe-Wamboldt (1992) such encounters can be reduced to smaller units. This reduction process prepares the data and begins by identifying themes emerging from the data that can be analytically categorised and coded for study purposes. In brief, CA constitutes composing and assembling, planning and presenting outcomes (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Elo *et al*., 2014).

In this respect, the current study constructs a thematic and systematic CA, where the coding system has entailed three phases, while taking into account the CDA to compose the theoretical framework and the methods for data collection and the data analysis. Prior to the interviews, the first phase involved starting to identify the broader categories based on the existing knowledge and literature of Arabish, my position as an Arabish user and a Saudi member, and the Saudi sociocultural conditions, including class fraction. Such knowledge supports in defining an initial direction of focus during the data collection, in accordance to the general theoretical framework and the research interests. The next phase was during the data processing, where the coding system was iteratively developed and restructured by considering additional themes. Since this systematic approach of CA is flexible (Harwood and Garny, 2003; Schreier 2012), it helped to initiate perceptions of the participants' narratives and generated a general categorisation of what had been read. During this process, I remained mindful of the sociocultural conditions of each participant through recollection of their observations, where conducted. Then, the data reduction commenced within this particular framework while expanding the coding framework to categorise additional information. Therefore, while processing the interviews systematically, emergent themes began to be identified and the reduction of the data commenced, although such reduction did not pose a threat to the original data, but rather the CA instruments helped to indicate a direction to consider relevant and irrelevant data (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992).

The final phase begun when the data processing stage had been concluded and all nine interviews could begin to be analysed. This entailed reading each interview in depth (line-by-line) and reflecting on every individual word and expression. Therefore, this helped make sense of the data (Bryman, 2012), and thus the collective perceptions of Arabish across the nine participants were accounted for; for instance, whether they all shared a positive attribute towards the practice and how it was described. Auerbach and Silverstein (2003, pp.40–44) state that the data coding process comprises of identifying 'relevant text', noting 'repeating ideas', highlighting themes, constructing theories and discussing the data. Their conceptualisation supported identifying the shared and opposing positions within the relevant texts across the nine interviews. At this stage, Bryman (2012, p.13) argues that such a process is accomplished through the analysis of the data by breaking it into 'component parts', to which the researcher assigns 'labels'. According to Auerbach and Silverstein (2003, p.38), such labels are established when the researcher

transitions from dealing with the 'raw' data to addressing the 'research concerns'. Eventually, these themes were related to the theoretical framework of the study, that is, Arabish as a practice presenting a certain status for its users within the macro level of Saudi society, and within the micro level of social groups (i.e. social class), as well as how these users employ Arabish as a source of social mobility.

One issue that needed to be addressed was the challenge of analysing data unencumbered by the prior assumptions of the researcher (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003). Therefore, to overcome such a problem the emergent themes such as the shift of Arabish's status and its social values among the EEG and EG participants were accounted for, and while some of these members no longer viewed Arabish as a source for social mobility, the MCG still believed in its affordance for social elevation. This finding challenged my earlier assumption that Arabish is used either as a medium to construct and present high status, or utilised for the purposes of social mobility. Therefore, the coding system was restructured to include sub-categories within the established coding framework, such as the existence of two sub-groups within the middle-class users that were opposed to one another, but both of whom were opposed to the collective group of EEG and EG. In addition, the coding framework was updated to include and classify the participants' emotions and feelings. Although this study only accounts for laughter, with the CA framework documenting its occurrence and context, it is believed that addressing the participants' emotions in different contexts contributes to our understanding of their various stances and reactions towards the discussed topic. This modification included the use of the phrase '*you know*', including its context, in order to prepared for the later CDA process. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), following these aforementioned stages can ensure the success of a CA process, particularly in qualitative studies, and thus this CA process was applied while revisiting the observations of the participants and their sociocultural conditions.

One of its disadvantages, however, is that CA is time consuming, while researchers can introduce inherent bias when formulating a research project. Therefore, the data are prepared and identified in a manner that entails further interpretation and discussion of the systematic findings. Being an approach that cannot provide a full explanation of various aspects in a given qualitative study (Schreier, 2012), CDA can fill and consequently bridge that gap. Tables 3.1 and 3.2 present the CA applied in this study, where Table 3.1 features the process of categorisation, commencing with the social problem (theoretical concern) being stated, before the initial coding that began prior to the data collection based on my knowledge, positions, study interests and the review of the literature. These codes were also initiated during the collection of the data, since the study focuses on the class distinction and power relations of Arabish IM users. Then, sub-categories were initiated after starting the analysis of the data to address additional and new emergent themes. The table also shows the labelling of themes or the initial codes that later directed the CDA and discussion of the data, taking into consideration the terms and phrases expressed by the participants during the course of the study, as well as their reflected emotions that supported their respective narrations and metadiscourse of Arabish. Meanwhile, Table 3.2 presents the coding framework for the phrase *you know* and laughter that manifested in the collected data.

Table 3.1 The coding process of the data

Theoretical Concerns	Initial Coding	Sub-categories	Labelling Themes	Emergent Patterns	Emotions
Status of Arabish	- Practice of young members -It can fulfil certain communicative needs for Saudis	- Issues of memberships - Association and disassociation to the creators of the Saudi Arabish	- Solidarity of the practice - Coded practice	'Young' - 'among us' 'Secret language' 'Native language'	'Assurance' 'Excitement' 'Hesitation'
Social value of Arabish	-Influence of social institutions, e.g. friends, education (certain norms exist) -Breaking with the old norms of communication and traditions of language	- Language ideology - Group membership - Social class membership - Educational and linguistic capital (cultural capital)	- Creative practice - Social value (social grouping, networking, obligation, expectation) - Soft rebellion	'Society' 'Cool' - 'hip' 'New' 'Very creative' 'Amazing' 'Movement'	'Love' 'Freedom'
Knowledge of Arabish	- Over time, practice can be managed (habits) - Power relations - Competition over linguistic resources	- Not everyone can use Arabish (requires knowledge of English to begin using it) - Not everyone is a competent user of Arabish - Rejection of new users of Arabish - Knowledge distinction (only certain users are capable of producing correct and legitimate Arabish) - Legitimate users and correctors vs. new comers	- The habit of Arabish (cultural capital) - Linguistic market (value of English) - Institutionalisation - Different positions (dispositions within the field) - Networking and social relations -right vs wrong	'Childhood' 'Used to it' 'Habit' 'Own way' 'Fluent' 'Competent' 'Educated' 'Sophisticated' 'Less proficiency of English'	'Like' (Arabish / English) 'Embarrassment'

Perception of Arabish	- Convenient for high status users - Allow social mobility - Signifier for high capital users and a source for status construction	- Arabish is no longer a signifier of the dominant group - Social injustice and class distinction - Arabish is a difficult practice - Anti-Arabish - Fear of social judgment and pressure - Subgroups among the middle-class group	- Symbolic capital - Ownership - Habitus - Class fraction - Saudi public discourse of class fraction - Religious ideology - Standard language ideology (nationality)	'Easier' 'Faster' 'English keyboard' 'Rich' 'Spoiled' 'Fear' 'Concern' 'Embarrassment' 'Being different' 'Their mood'	'Admiration' 'Confidence' 'Rejection' 'Fear'
Code-switching (spoken and written data)	- Habitus - Educational capital - Cultural value of English and institutions	- Sustain class distinction - Habitus - Exclusiveness of the elite - Subgroups within the collective Arabish group - Educational and linguistic capital - Mediation of power relations and position - Sophistication class - Symbolic capital - Social mobility for middle-class groups	- Disposition vs. position - Language ideology - Disadvantage groups vs advantage ones - Distinction - Production and re-production - Social power of educational institutions - Job market	'Us' 'We' 'Our talk' 'Our way' 'My way' 'My friends' 'Travel' 'Cool kids' 'Their language' 'High class'	'Attachment' 'Detachment' 'Admiration' 'Frustration'
Self-presentation	- Individual perceptions of self from class conditions. - Individual perception of self in relation to his/her social group - Being different needs social legitimacy (middle-class users)	- Superior Arabish user (CS) - Superior English and Arabic user (across high status users)	- Position and the field - Position and social structure - Opposition to others - Distinctive self	'Prestigious' 'High-status' 'Social intolerance'	'Arrogance' 'Racism' 'Sarcasms' 'Pride'

Table 3.2 CA framework of verbal and non-verbal linguistic units

Linguistic and non-linguistic units	Incidents
You know	- Negotiation of knowledge - Negotiating position and power relation (encounters of different class or the need for distinction) - Seeking social and knowledge approval - Confirm shared position (similar taste and class) - Confirm opposition towards different social class - Presupposed assumption of the researcher's knowledge
Laughter	- Embarrassment - Checking perceptions (researcher's perception towards users, e.g. one middle-class user) - Discrimination towards others of outer groups

3.9 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a significant element in empirical research (Holloway and Brown, 2012). It concerns every step within a study: deciding on a project, collecting the required knowledge, selecting the tools for collecting the data, interpreting the data, dealing with the involved subjects and presenting the results. To achieve trustworthiness, Holloway and Brown (2012, pp.14–19) articulate a number of requirements that are recommended within a project where one of the major aspects is reflexivity, which manifests in two domains: 'personal' and 'epistemological' (Ibid., p.19). According to Holloway and Wheeler (2010), the researcher needs to be reflective in his/her examination of a particular context. This is achieved through 'studying' and 'documenting' the self within the examination process, that is, how the researcher's knowledge and position have evolved during the course of collecting the information and dealing with it (Preissle and de Marrais, 2015). Furthermore, Holloway and Brown (2012) suggest that 'personal' and 'epistemological' reflexivity indicate deeper connotations than merely being a reflective researcher. Personal reflexivity means the researcher's personal opinions, thoughts and perspectives that come in accordance with the phenomenon he/she examines and the manner that their position is related and connected to the participants' stories.

Therefore, being an insider researcher, as in this study, encompasses two types of positions: first, being a member who belongs to the same culture as the participants helps in understanding their stories, and thus my perspectives and interpretations would accordingly fall within the meaning behind these users' experiences; and second, through putting myself in the participants' shoes I was able to link similar and opposing narrations among the participants and in relation to mine. This membership position has its own particular advantages, with Miller and Glassner (2004) and Flick (2006) pointing out that researchers may face challenges in cases where they do not belong to the same community as the examined individuals. Therefore, taking this insider position as noted in section (4.3.3) can, according to Holloway and Brown (2012), help in presenting an analytical investigation of others' practices. This membership aspect can also be linked to the process of prolongation, where the researcher extends the length of his/her existence within the field or the settings of the study (Guba and Lincoln, 1989; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003; Holloway and Wheeler, 2010), although in this case the author did not remain for a long period of time within the physical space of the studied participants, since being an Arabish user had allowed her to spend time online within this young group for over ten years. The potential benefit of this could be to allow the researcher to be aware of the conditions and the structure of the practice, and to ascertain whether an Arabish user who employs particular discursive practices shares a similar knowledge base, and whether their perceptions of their social activity align.

Therefore, as an Arabish user myself, this can be considered as an advantage in respect to the different perspectives of and approaches to Arabish being familiar to me, knowledge which went some way towards further enriching the data mix and the study generally. The second type, ‘epistemological' reflexivity (Holloway and Brown, 2012, p.19), is primarily concerned with the study itself, how the research is established, the tools employed for investigation and the ways to handle the outcomes. As such, this study encompassed observation, interviews and written examples as the main instruments for the investigation, which are believed to facilitate in fostering a greater degree of understanding and can extend my own knowledge of the contributive sociocultural mechanisms within the context of Arabish IM exchanges. This is what Johnson and Rowlands (2012) highlight, whereby such tools can supplement the researcher’s membership and position to thus enrich the examination. Therefore, considering Patnaik’s (2013) account of reflexivity as a constitutive component of the analytical process allows the researcher to situate him/herself within the study and the ways the data influence the researcher’s perspective and vice versa, such an aspect has been taken into account.

Another route to accomplish trustworthiness is contextualisation through providing a rich explanation of the context of an examined object or practice (Holloway and Brown, 2012). By this, Patton (2015) adheres to the belief that the context of an examined phenomenon should be managed with sensitivity and consideration. Consequently, this was achieved through providing a dense description of the examination process, including a rich picture of the conditions, members, settings, theoretical development and the researcher’s position (Holloway and Wheeler, 2010). Thus, since all these aspects add to the accuracy and

quality of a study, I have provided a full description of the cultural and social structure of Saudi Arabia, its norms, conditions, practices, geographical description, traditions, and social classes, as well as description of the nine examined members, supported by the participants' perceptions and considerations of the Saudi condition, including the society, culture, economics and education. The narratives of these studied individuals lead to another point in assuring the trustworthiness of a study, namely authenticity. Researchers such as Miller and Glassner (2004) and Holloway and Wheeler (2010) raise the issue of authenticity in respect to the participants' narratives, and whether such narrations should be regarded as representing an accurate reflection of their social world. This proposed assumption was related to their questioning of whether instruments such as interviews can fully paint an accurate reflection of the social experience. Therefore, the participant observation and written Arabish examples were exploited to support and verify their account of Arabish and narratives.

Another point is that the researcher needs to devote the necessary time and effort to explore the existing knowledge surrounding the project and to carry out the work in order to be trusted (van den Hoonaard and van de Hoonaard, 2013), in which this checking process extends to requesting that peers or colleagues review the analysis and discussed outcomes (Holloway and Wheeler, 2010). Accordingly, two friends, one who had just obtained his doctorate in education from Queen Mary University and the other a PhD candidate at Cambridge University reading gender studies were asked to review the translation of the data, the analysis and the discussion. In respect to the translation they helped to identify several linguistic challenges and potentials, particularly in terms of translating traditional Saudi expressions and terms. Therefore, adjustments were made in a manner that enhanced the translated meaning. Meanwhile, they confirmed the accuracy of the translation in relation to the data as a whole. Their feedback was productive, since they offered various interpretations of the data that might not have been linked to the purpose of this study, thus helping to ensure that this study's findings can be applicable to other contexts. This particular feedback is referred to as transferability (Holloway and Wheeler, 2010) or reliability (Marvasti, (2004), and is defined as the relevance of findings across different studies and the ability to apply similar interpretations by different researchers in different fields.

There is a broad assumption that the researcher needs to be objective in his/her evaluation of the data in order to produce a nuanced judgment that does not risk or compromise the credibility of the study. Mayan (2016), in this respect, stresses the point that despite the different assumptions that any type of study should be unbiased, within the research field this can be challenging to achieve. According to Mayan (2016) a 'neutral' project is not possible, since the data are conditioned and inflected by the researcher's interpretations. Data of any form can tolerate different interpretations, which all depends on the variant inquiries a researcher calls for. Therefore, through applying particular interpretations that fall within the theoretical assumptions in this study and by considering how the participants' positions and class distinction confirm or oppose such assumptions, the data were treated equitably. The final point in considering the trustworthiness was in terms of the manner of approaching the examined participants. In

spite of the challenges initially encountered in approaching potential participants from the working-class group and the repeated attempts to gain access to additional Saudi males, all the participants in this study gave their full consent to participate in the investigation. Meanwhile, I was highly considerate when accessing the field of observation and interviews, paying particular attention to the appropriate dress code, language used, greetings and conveying appreciation for the invitation and hospitality.

3.10 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are an essential component of any research study and seek to protect humans' subjects involved (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Bryman, 2012). For example, Flick (2006) underscores that respondents must participate voluntarily and that detailed information has to be provided to them in relation to the aims and processes of the study. In this respect, Kaiser (2012) highlights three distinct phases of the study: the pre-interview phase, the interview itself and the post-interview production of the data. Prior to interviewing, Kaiser (2012) argues that informants need to be provided with documentation that contains all the necessary information about the study, including the data collection procedures, in order to gain the participants' trust. Information sheets were therefore given to the study participants, in which the study's objectives, processes and their participation rights were fully explained (see Appendix 5). In addition, since informed consent needs to o be obtained from the participants either in spoken or written forms (Marvasti, 2004), all the participants signed consent forms prior to the start of the interview (see Appendix 6). This was in order to confirm their voluntary participation in this study.

During the interviews, participants were able cease the recording at any point if they no longer wished to participate in the study (Flick, 2007; Holloway and Wheeler, 2010), while they had the right to withdraw from the study, even after being interviewed (see Appendix 5). An additional aspect addressed by Kaiser (2012) and Van den Hoonaard and Van de Hoonaard (2013) is that of confidential private comments provided by the participants during the course of interviews. The researcher must, therefore, decide whether to publish these comments or not, with such decisions rarely being clear-cut. Kaiser suggests asking for the respondents' permission to contact them at a future date in order to discuss this question of publication, which is the approach adopted by this study. During the data production phase, I dealt with the data in a highly considerate and sensitive manner. Therefore, some of the extreme expressions and terms the participants used, particularly to characterise and refer to other non-Arabish users, are presented in this study with the permission of their producers. In such situations, I contacted the participants early during the data transcription process to verify their expressions and see if they consented for them to be used in the study. As such, these participants agreed to the inclusion of their expressions unaltered and without noting any concerns.

In addition, particular emphasis was placed on the issue of confidentiality; therefore, the participants were all assigned pseudonyms (Raills and Rossman, 2009). These names were used throughout the study at

different stages, starting from my initial process of transcribing in Arabic, as Arabic names used locally in KSA were assigned to the participants. According to Flick (2006), the analysis and presentation of data should not compromise the confidentiality or identity of the participants in any manner. Thus, these Arabic pseudonyms are used in both the analytical and presentation phases, with the personal data closely monitored at all times. Moreover, the nine pseudonyms remained the same, including my presentation of the initial results during the seminars and conferences. The only information revealed about the nine participants was their age, gender, social and educational background, and their current professional positions, without indicating any identifying names of these institutions. This was agreed by the participants in order to ensure a high degree of confidentiality of their identity. One of the concerns raised by McAreavey and Das (2013) is in relation to confidentiality, together with the complex and dialect relationship and communication between the researcher and the existent gatekeepers.

By gatekeepers, they refer to those individuals who are positioned between the researcher and the participants, and in the context this study specifically those individuals who referred the interviewees to me; thus, it could be assumed that the existence of such gatekeepers might compromise confidentiality in terms of the identification of the participants. The referring members thus have access to the participants' information, and by not being fully aware of the high significance of ethical consideration the participants' privacy could be at risk. In order to overcome this possible threat, I provided a full explanation on the importance of keeping such participants' identities anonymous and not to refer to them as being a part of my study. At the same time, I asked these gatekeepers to immediately make me aware of any potential issues, whereby they felt that something might compromise the participants' privacy. The nine participants, in addition, were advised to contact me directly in any cases where they felt that there was a threat to their privacy and anonymity. I believe that the rapport I established with these individuals has helped to ensure the integrity of such an aspect. Since the collection of the data and at the point of writing no problems have manifested, and thus it is believed that these gatekeepers have honoured this private aspect as I maintain a direct connection with them.

3.11 Limitations

In the different fields of research, the examiner should be aware of certain limitations that may present. In this respect, the researcher must remain fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the chosen methodology in their particular study (Patton, 2015). One consideration which must be accounted for in respect of qualitative research is the potential for the introduction of subjective bias by the researcher, since however careful the researcher may be, it is possible that their own opinions and views may be conveyed to the interviewee and may thus exert some small measure of influence on their responses. This subjective bias may result from a particular line of questioning or thought (Reynolds *et al.*, 2011). Equally, it is possible that if the researcher is unfamiliar with the local customs and practices they may not register

the subtleties and nuances in the context of the interview that a more knowledgeable interviewer would be attuned to. Burke-Johnson (1997) reminds us that social and cultural backgrounds may introduce subtle biases, which some researchers may not fully appreciate if they are unfamiliar with the local mores. However, this is not applicable in this case, as has been addressed.

One of the main limitations in this study was in respect to identifying male participants, since contacting opposing genders is not a straightforward process in the KSA. However, I exploited my personal connections in order to identify several males and meet them in their offices. All of the male participants had their own established businesses, which facilitated the task of meeting them for interviews only. Due to the sociocultural conditions of Saudi society, a point that has been fully discussed in the context of its public discourse (see section 2.4), it was not possible to observe these male participants in informal social gatherings. Additionally, and as this study highlights, it was virtually impossible to contact other males from other classes such as the middle or working class. As for the female participants, the interviews were easier and involved less tension as the previously mentioned cultural restrictions were not a barrier. Another challenge was the withdrawal of two young females aged 24–25 years from the working-class background, who did not proceed with the interview. An investigation of the precise reasons for the participants' withdrawal was not possible since they suddenly decided not to go ahead with the interview. Thus, the final contractions caused by the withdrawal left me with a sample of nine participants distributed between three socio-economic classes: the established elite, the elite, and the middle class.

An additional limitation was in respect to not being able to exist for long periods of time with the participants, observing their F2F interactions, as well as their IM interactions. For the former, it is the sociocultural conditions and traditional norms that contribute to such a challenge, while the latter is associated with IM settings, this being a private field for interaction. A further limitation was the gathering of the written data of Arabish, where despite these examples being in the form of screenshots of two-way conversations, it was not possible to reflect upon the other interlocutors' exchanges within these examples. The third limitation is that this study was conducted in a certain period and thus the case specific to this study might have changed since this thesis was drafted. With the rapid social changes unfolding in Saudi Arabia, especially by the younger members, discursive new and different social practices may appear. This is also related to the shifts of positions that its users seem to apply for social mobility and distinction, and thus today's practices may no longer be appropriate for future contexts. Examining the history of Arabish within Saudi Arabia from being a distinctive practice for exclusive members to no longer being a signifier practice may challenge Arabish's future and meaning for its users, and therefore this study can be seen as presenting the current situation at the time the data were collected, with further studies necessary in order to keep pace with the radical changes unfolding in the KSA.

3.12 Summary

This chapter considered the analytical approach and the ways in which I dealt with the yielded outcomes and the process of analysis, justifying the epistemological and theoretical stance through applying an interpretive qualitative approach to the study of informal Arabish IM exchanges among nine Saudis from Riyadh city. Taking into account the sociocultural conditions, language and religious ideology, class fraction, power relations and public discourse of Saudi Arabia entailed and informed the use of CDA. First, CA was used to build a systematic coding framework, where the data could be reduced to smaller units before being critically analysed. The process of collecting the data through observations, interviews and written Arabish examples was also presented, these being the tools applied for the investigation. Furthermore, the methodological limitations and challenges in respect to gender and cultural issues were considered, where my presented position as an insider and outsider helped to conceptualise and overcome such limitations in order to achieve the study purposes. The following chapter now provides a critical discussion of the data.

Chapter 4: Arabish Linguistic Properties and Conventions

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings about the linguistic properties of Arabish in respect to the nine Arabish IM examples between the participants and their friends and family members. The chapter aims to answer the first research question in relation to the Arabish users' awareness of the mooted differences of Arabish practices and the extent to which these practices can be considered as conventions. Therefore, the chapter starts by outlining the definition of Arabish in section 4.1, and the practicality resulting from employing the ASCII. Then it presents the study's findings in the context of Arabish's linguistic properties, and in particular among the nine Arabish IM users from Riyadh city in section 4.2. Furthermore, section 4.3 discusses the variation found within the emergent Arabish conventions. In relation to the IM spaces being similar to the F2F, section 4.4 shows the use of emoticons and symbols to convey non-verbal features, while section 4.5 reflects upon the participants' narration regarding the benefit of Arabish in facilitating their communication. As this study has pointed out, linguistic examination is not the core of its theoretical framework, and thus this chapter only provides an overview of the Arabish linguistic properties among the examined participants.

4.2 Understanding Arabish

So far, Arabish has been defined 'as an encoding system that uses the Latin script and Arabic numbers instead of Arabic letters' (Allehaiby, 2013). Since the ASCII (the American Standard Code for Information Interchange) was adopted as the format system of computers and was first introduced around 1960, it has only supported the English language. This contributed, eventually, to the limitation of supporting languages other than English. As such, non-English communities started to use the Latin script to represent their own dialects, such as in Greece (Tseliga, 2007; Androutsopoulos, 2009) and the Arab world (Chalabi and Gerges, 2012). With the view that the Internet no longer constitutes or presents one unified language (Danet and Herring, 2007), such multimodal use of the Latin script becomes more evident. Online users in general and IM users in particular no longer have to compromise their own native language or dialect when utilising online forums for social interaction, and although it was claimed that with the globalisation process and the emergence of multidimensional and multicultural practices users' culture would be accordingly influenced (Pennycook, 2007), the case was seen to be different in respect to the Saudi IM users, since they all belong to the same culture and utilise IM for their private one-to-one interactions.

Therefore, in the Saudi context, digraphia has now become a significant practice among young Saudis. Having two scripts for communication is widely seen among this social category. As has been addressed, the reference to young here includes the young adult as well, and thus the term 'young' is used to refer to the whole group. Furthermore, Arabish in Saudi Arabia, and particularly that practised in Riyadh city

differs from the Arabish practised in other regions within the country. With the diverse dialects within the KSA, Arabish's properties and presentation to some extent vary accordingly to support a certain dialect (see Chapter 1, section 3.5.2, for such an example).

4.3 Arabish linguistic properties among Riyadh's IM users

Since the Arabish in this study presents the Saudi dialect, particularly the one used in Riyadh city, such a dialect was reflected within the Arabish documentation provided by the nine users who all hail from this region. Despite the different capitals these users reflected, they all communicated the everyday speech within this Saudi region. According to Aboelezz (2009), Arabish is the use of the Latin orthographic system as a substitution for the Arabic script, 'which uses arithmographemes i.e., numerals as letters' (Bianchi, 2014, p.128). Going back in history, this was in order to overcome the limitations of ASCII in supporting other scripts and so the use of Arabish began, and its continuity signifies its importance. The findings of this study show that the ways the nine Arabish users utilised the Latin orthography to present their Arabish to a large extent are similar to those documented by Palfreyman and Al-Khalil (2007), for example. The data, therefore, showed several aspects in relation to the Arabish conventions. First, the presentation of Arabic letters in Arabish is based on the choice of the Latin character that phonetically mimics the one in the Arabic sound system. Second, the conventions were seen in the substitutions that took place with the application of arithmographemes for some Arabic sounds, such as using numbers such as 2, 7, 9, etc. Following Allehaiby's (2013) classification, Table 4.1 reflects the Arabish words employed in their nine written examples and the substitution of particular Arabic sounds that do not exist within the English phonological system.

Table 4.1 Analysis of Arabish words

Phonetic Description	Arabic Letter	Arithmographemes	English Letters	Example
Voiced glottal stop /ʔ/	ء	2	-----	As2lh (ask him)
Devoiced pharyngeal fricative /ħ/	ح	7	H	El7al (condition) Al7mdllah (thank God)

Voiceless velar fricative /x/	خ	5 -‘7	Kh	B5air (fine) Khalsto (done)
Voiceless velarised alveolar fricative /sʕ/	ص	9	-----	9ar (happened) by9er (will happen)
Voiced velarised dento-alveolar stop /dʕ/	ض	‘9	D	No example was documented
Voiceless velarised dento-alveolar stop /tʕ/	ط	6	-----	6mneny (let me know) 76y(put) 6regy (my way)
Voiced pharyngeal fricative /ʕ/	ع	3	-----	3la (on) Ntl3 (going out)
Voiced uvular fricative /ɣ/	غ	‘3	-----	F6steni (laughing hard)
Voiceless uvular stop /q/	ق	8	K	8rrt (decide)

One distinctive use was in presenting the word ‘Ntl3’ by Reem from the EEG. In spoken Gulf Arabic, including all the regions in the KSA, there is a difference between using the plain consonant /t/, which presents the sound ت, and the emphatic consonant /t’/ that stands for another Arabic sound, which as seen in Table 4.2 is ط, with these plain and emphatic consonants presented in Table 4.2. It is important to note that these emphatic consonants, whether dental or inter-dental, and although these sounds might not be

used in other Arabic contexts such as Egypt, are mainly used in the Saudi context. Further, these emphatic consonants are main features within the classic Arabic language. Such use of this plain consonant to represent the emphatic sound ط can be explained in relation to the user's style of writing, which might differ from the user's verbal production of this particular sound in F2F settings.

Table 4.2 Plain and emphatic pairs in the Arabic language (Aboelezz, 2009, p.5)

	Dental				Inter-dental			
	Plain		Emphatic		Plain		Emphatic	
Fricative	/s/	س	/s′/	ص	/ð/	ذ	/ð′/	ظ
Plosive	/t/	ت	/t′/	ط				
	/d/	د	/d′/	ض				

Stylisation has been found to be a common feature among young online users in general, and while these linguistic selections and choices (Lee, 2013) could be seen in relation to the fluidity of linguistic resources available within online spaces (Blommaert, 2010), in this participant's particular case this might differ. The softness of sustaining the emphatic with the plain consonant might be attributed to present a particular feminine identification of the user. Based on the F2F observation and interview with this particular user, Reem presented a feminine identity in both contexts, for example, through her physical appearance, wearing bright colours such as pink, and the way she organised her hair and makeup. Also, during the observation she talked about her addiction to black and white romantic Egyptian films and her admiration of the old Egyptian actresses as icons of beauty and femininity. This extended to other aspects within the physical space such as the way she moved and talked. This is similar to Vaisman's (2011a, 2011b, 2014, 2016) work and findings, when she showed the Israeli girls' online practices to reflect such a femininity identity, in comparison to the other group of young girls who presented a more Gothic identity. The finding here suggests that IM spaces allow for such identity presentation, and that being a user of a feminine identity is similar to the Fakatsa group in Vaisman's study. However, it was agreed among the participants that the Arabic sound of ح, the devoiced pharyngeal fricative /ħ/, can only be presented through the employment of the number 7, and the voiceless velarised alveolar fricative /sʕ/ in Arabic ص is only presented by employing the number 9.

4.4 Variations within the Arabish conventions

One of the study's findings was the variation in presenting one single Arabic sound in some cases; for example, in order to present the sound خ three different strategies can be applied: the use of the number 5; the use of the number 7 with a dot on top (‘7), which in this particular case was supported by the narration of one of the MCG users; or the use of /kh/, the voiceless velar fricative /x/ to present this particular Arabic sound. This was supported by the narration of some members from the EEG and MCG. While the use of ‘7 seemed to be a conceptual convention for this MCG member, the use of /kh/ constitutes different values. This authenticity of using /kh/ for users with higher social class came from the high value attached to the

English language, in which /kh/ seemed more English to them than the 5 or ‘7. For example, Ahmed from the EEG stated:

> *always t h .. I always like the original (.) it is better than four ((laughs)) .. t h is more English (.) I use English a lot maybe that is why (0.4) some people (.) maybe (0.1) they do not know (what the t h for*

Although in many cases some users seemed to not possess a solid grounding in respect to the established Arabish conventions as different practices, the presentation of its symbols can be accepted. This, however, varies from one user to another, and the reasons behind such variations are not always necessary clear. This stance, moreover, of appreciation of the original will be further discussed in relation to the cultural value of English in a coming chapter. However, discrepancies were noted in presenting the voiceless uvular stop /q/ for the Arabic sound ق, while only one of the participants (Huda) confirmed the use of the number 8 to present such a sound as in her production of the word ‘8rrt’, while most of the remaining participants employed the letter ‘g’ to present such a sound, such as in ‘golely’ and ‘6regy’, including many others. Another variety within this Arabish conventions system, as the findings showed, was in the employment of the sound **/ð/** (‘th’) to present the Arabic sound ذ (which equates to the voiced interdental fricative such as in the words ‘there’, ‘mother’ and ‘brother’ in English). For such an Arabic sound, it is well known that Arabish users in general employ the English number 4.

The study found that this was mainly sustained among all participants of the MCG. However, the only condition to avoid confusion between the voiceless /θ/ (‘th’) such as in the English words ‘thing’ and ‘therapy’ and the voiced **/ð/** where this diagraph can represent the two different Arabic sounds was the need to add an apostrophe between the ‘t’ letter and the ‘h’ letter to represent the voiceless /θ/ (‘t’h’). So far, the findings suggest that Arabish constitutes particular linguistic conventions of its own, which in many cases can be similar to the ones existing in other Arabic contexts. What makes Arabish distinct in this study is that even with the direct employment of the words, letter by letter relying on the phonological system of the English language, it was challenging to identify certain conventions or norms in respect to producing Arabic words in the Arabish form, since each word can be manifested differently by different members based on personal evaluations. This, as such, is related to the user’s perception and style in constructing the words in Arabish in which it presents as speak-like speech. In addition, although it could be said that Arabish might constitute certain conventions to some extent, particularly in respect to the employment of numbers to represent Arabic sounds, within such an aspect there was mobility across these numbers. Despite the fact that in some cases the distinction of such choices seemed blurred, some of the participants’ choices were motivated by the desire for distinction.

4.5 Emoticons and symbols

One of addressed points in this study is that IM settings could be regarded as an extension to F2F settings, which according to Suh and Change (2006) and Ibrahim (2011) indicates the user's presence and sense of self within the virtual settings. This, as such, includes the presentation of non-verbal sounds and emotions such as laughter. In this respect, the study found that Arabish participants are no different than other online users found around the world in utilising emoticons and symbols to present sound-like features. First, the study reported the use of reduplication, which is a common feature among online users in general. For example, one of the EEG (Amal) presented the word *marraa* (meaning 'also' in English) with a reduplicated letter /e/ in order to refer to the high degree of laughter and to describe the genre of film. Moreover, the switch to Arabish manifesting through the use of the expression *marraa* was due to the belief that the reduplication of the 'r' and 'a' letters can represent stress. One linguistic feature in the Arabic language is the /shad-da/ sign, which is used in doubling the sound of an Arabic letter. This sign is always placed on the top of the letter and in this case, in order to present this feature, Amal decided to double the letter 'r' to indicate this stress or /shad-da/ feature. However, in doubling the letter 'a', she represented the /al-mad/ feature, which is known as the unreal quiescence in the Arabic language and used to extend the sound of Arabic letters.

Therefore, with the absence of physical connections among these Arabish users, especially in accordance with the timing of their online interaction, they rely on particular symbols to present sound effects and certain expressions that only exist within the F2F spaces. It is with the help of the structured online spaces that these users were able to gain advantage from the available resources to assimilate interactive physical characteristics. Indicating the funny aspect of a movie might accord Amal's perception with required skills through the indication of its significance and the affirmation of such a humorous feature. This was addressed in the following narration by Amal:

> *okay (.) I choose this conversation because it is real TI did watch this movie (.) and e was funny e was hilarious (.) and like like (.) I am telling her (.) look you would like it (.) and ooooo (.) what else .. its real .. for example T I wrote to you fUnny T all in English but is in Arabish and funny T is an English word .. it is easy (.) m a double r because of the stress on the letter*

The employment of *marraa* might always be followed by an English adverb or adjective in order to indicate the type and nature of the topic being described. Furthermore, the structure of online spaces, and particularly in this example the interaction within the mobile phone medium that allows social group connections, allows the representation of 'speak-in-writing' in different cases. With the absence of physical interaction, Arabish users were able to carry physical features into their online interactions. The flexibility of online platforms and through the creativity of online users in general physical barriers is no longer a challenge for communication, including feelings and emotions. This is addressed in relation to the

influence of globalisation and the flow of information within online spaces, conveying physical-like sounds and the presentation of laughter and other emotions and in the following.

The reduplication of letters in addition, can indicate not only the significance of the subject but also the tone of its producer; for example, the reduplication for *high tones* such as the use of *rrrr,* which was noted also by the same EEG member, Amal. As such she said

> *I noticed a lot of my friends (.) they do the same this for example (.) when they want to type something $ ahh they want me to feel something for example A HIGH TONE or something (.) they write the letter in a capital form couple of times (.) I had that friend $ I swear (.) BEFORE FEW DAYS she wrote rrrr (.) r w a (.) and then maybe five rs (0.5) and I WHEN I read it (.) I felt that she raised her voice … felt real (.) as if someone is really talking*

These aspects within a written discourse are a way of overcoming the absence of physical interaction, this is in relation to conveying certain spoken characteristics, as was evident by Danet (2001, p.127) when he encountered similar features among online users in different situations such as their repetition of sounds. Moreover, the flexibility of online spaces and their available resources helps the users to encounter experiences that might be no different to their physical interaction. The study reported the use of certain marks and symbols such as question and exclamation marks to reflect particular emotions such as surprise, excitement or to evoke reactions. The use of these signs enables the users to connect at an emotional level and to share feelings and stances toward the discussed topics (McDougald *et al*., 2011).

Additional insight was found through the use of different emoticons supported by the smartphone, which were used to communicate laughter, smiling and embarrassment. Most of the participants, as such, agreed on their emoticons' meanings and signified their importance to overcome the absence of F2F existence during IM interactions. Kataoka (2003) stresses their importance in conveying certain feelings between online interlocutors. Such signs constitute stronger preference in comparison to the use of symbols, due to the belief that such emoticons can present in a direct manner the exact emotion without any potential for confusion, since the range has been created to address the majority of the human emotions. Emoticons were thus used to convey laughter, the extent of laughter, innocence and embarrassment, where many Arabish users claimed that certain types of emotions could not actually be expressed in words. One example was the plural use of certain emoticons, which was highlighted by the MCG user, Sara, to indicate stronger laughter. This usage was also found in different studies among young members (Sharma, 2012).

However, this earlier assumption that emoticons could be preferable to symbols in conveying the accurate feelings of the participants was found to not necessarily be the case. The findings revealed the variant and non-consistent use of different features to present laughter. For example, not only could emoticons represent this emotional expression, but also those such as *lol* and *hehe* helped Arabish users to express their level of enjoyment. In the following exchange was between Noof, a user of the EG, with her friend, when she decided to employ both 'LOOOL' and 'hehehe' to indicate laughter.

Figure 4.1 Arabish and emoticons

The use of 'lol' is a common feature in different contexts, such as those explored by Palfreyman and Al-Khalil (2007) and El-Essawi (2011). In relation to Saudi Arabish users, their manipulation of online spaces to accommodate certain local needs was seen in relation to adapting particular forms into the Arabish context. For example, although this *lol* aspect represents laughter, while the capitalisation such as *LOOOL* or the use of *hehehe* indicates a high degree of laughter, the use of one 'o' in some cases could mean that the interactive topic did not evoke laughter, and thus this use of *lol* could be seen as courteous behaviour.

4.6 Arabish can overcome technical and communicative issues

As has been stated, the inherent limitation in supporting the Arabic keyboard motivated online users to invent new modes of interaction in order to address their social and communicative needs. These forms, however, differ from one context to another depending on the social conditions of the context itself and the needs of those communicators. In a similar manner, Greeklish serves to accommodate its particular users' needs, while Lee's (2007) study likewise addressed the employment of Romanised Cantonese among online users in Hong Kong (For further studies, see the literature review, Chapter 1, section 1.2). The majority of the Arabish users in this study referred to such a limitation. However, the current technological devices such as computers, laptops and mobile phones all incorporate both the Arabic and English script. Within Saudi Arabia and the Arab world in general, the prevalence of the two scripts is such that the user can now readily avail of either option. Despite this evident availability, one claim was that Arabish is used to overcome the poor typing skills of the Arabic script. One of these accounts was

reported by an EG user (Saeed), in which he extends such unfamiliarity with the Arabic script to young Saudis in general.

> *FASTER ah faster because MOST people they are not used (.) to the Arabic keyboard and they do not know how to write Arabic in a fast way .. most of the young people (.) most of the young people .. do not know how to write Arabic fast .. and at the same TIME not everyone is fluent in English or can understand English well .. so you cannot create a whole conversation in English with them PLUS OF COURSE that the slang Arabic .. it is HARD to say a lot using the slang in the English .. but THERE ARE some expressions that you have to write them exactly as the way you say them in your dialect .. for example the word ' [this word is the Arabic version of the English verb 'I want']*
>
> (Saeed, EG)

This shows several arguments. First, Arabish can facilitate greater typing speeds and indirectly perhaps promote improved levels of online interaction. From a psychological level, the relationship between communicators of a certain text can be established when a user is able to communicate feelings, views and interactions through a writing or texting process (Suler, 2005), With the absence of F2F communication, texting or writing influences the quality of such relationships and vice-versa (Ibid). The depth and strength of relationships among users comes through trust and being comfortable enough to interact and communicate, and through being open to new and shared practices within the field; thus, possessing poor typing skills may interrupt interaction. The repetition of the word *faster* inclusive of a high tone could be interpreted in relation to the significance of Arabish on his interactions. Perhaps with Saeed's account, one could relate this to the cognitive ability in the writing process addressed by Purcell *et al*. (2011), which is referred to as dysgraphia. However, cognitive examination did not fall within the scoop of this study, and thus it is impossible to confirm this claim.

Another point that could render this dysgraphia claim implausible is that in his narration he asserts that most of the young Saudis are unfamiliar with the Arabic script, while also stating that use of the English script might also be considerable across different Saudis. His claim was made from a particular social position, assuming that most of the young Saudis do not utilise the Arabic script for local communication. The introduction of English in this context as one possible communicative language among young Saudis is indicative of its significance within the society. This point will be discussed further in the forthcoming sections of this chapter. Arabish, as such, could be held to be a substitute not only for the Arabic but also for the English language, as not every member could be regarded as 'fluent' in English. The third point is that English nonetheless failed to convey the full sense and meaning of the original Arabic, particularly in communicating the dialect of Riyadh City. Some local expression, for example, '(need or want), a word whose full sense and meaning Saeed contended could only be produced in Arabish. Although this word is originally Arabic and has a direct translation in the English language (I want), it seems that for Saeed the social and communicative value of such a word can only be fully realised when given form through Arabish itself. This point of language difficulty was reported across the data, as Arabic is a difficult language to be employed in written IM exchanges. As such, Reem (EEG) noted this difficulty in the

following narration, and thus one cannot claim that all Saudis encounter a similar experience in relation to their mother tongue.

> *the whole idea is that hooo (0.3) Arabic is difficult to be Written or maybe (.) I am not used to it (.) BUT at the same time speaking Arabic is easier than English .. I mean (.) there are a lot of talks that you cannot produce it is not there (.) at that time 1 and at the same time (.) writing Arabic is difficult .. ARABIC LETTERS (.) even if ( ) it will be difficult .. that is it (.) the English (.) the ahh (.) same ENGLISH LETTERS (.) I mean you write same letters in Arabic .. so it becomes very easy .... than writing this or this*
>
> (Reem, EEG)

Although the Arabic language is the principal medium of communication for Saudis whether written, spoken, formal or informal, Reem distinguishes between two forms of communication in Arabic: written and spoken. As already noted in the literature review, in Saudi Arabia three forms of Arabic are employed. The first is classic Arabic, which is used in literature and taught at schools. The second is the standard modern Arabic, which is used in different contexts such as newspapers. The third is the dialect form, which varies from one social context to another and from one region to another. The employment of such dialect has been reported in various contexts, for example, educational, religious, social and political (Sabbah, 2015). In addition, this dialect is the form of Arabic used mostly in informal online social interactions, is less standardised and employs far fewer linguistic conventions compared to the classic and standard modern Arabic. However, Reem's difficulty can be attributed to her lack of familiarity with the Arabic keyboard and lack of practice with respect to the language itself. As such, this could again be examined in relation to the point of dysgraphia, although this claim requires some different tools for examination. A competent language speaker in F2F settings does not necessarily mean such a speaker is a competent writer or online communicator of the same language, and vice versa.

This also might influence the user's attributes to a certain language or form of communication and thus with such attitudes the quality of communication can be affected. Arabish, as a result, can facilitate the communication of the author's own thoughts and at the same time it reflects her preference for such representation. Another aspect is that English is considered as not being a suitable form for conveying the particular social and communicative needs of these young users. It may be that local expressions and terms exist with certain social and cultural values associated with the spaces, where these expressions emerged. This was also a point addressed in Warschauer *et al.*'s (2007) study, where they noted that Egyptian users switch from English to Arabish to address important topics or contents that they believed cannot be delivered in the form of English language. Arabish in this respect came as an accommodated arrangement for those online users, who wishes to communicate their dialect in a certain form in which such a form constitutes certain values for these users. Being sceptical of both Saeed and Reem's stances towards the Arabic language, precisely the use of the Arabic script to communicate the dialect, came later in their narratives when they confirmed their competency with the language. As such, this can be indicative of the manner in which an Arabish user appropriates Arabish signs for certain local expressions based on a personal evaluation.

Chapter 5: Arabish Presenting a Social Practice

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to discussing the findings associated to the perception of Arabish being a social practice within the IM field. One of the main research questions is to examine how Arabish functions as a social practice in Saudi society. In order to do so, this chapter will answer the second research question: In what ways does Arabish function in the field of online written communications as a social practice in Saudi society? This section addresses the ways in which Arabish can be regarded as presenting the local dialect of Riyadh city. Therefore, the chapter starts by outlining the adopted definition in this study of what stands for social practice in section. Then, it moves on to discuss one of the findings in respect to Arabish signifying the young Saudi users who participated in this study, primarily due to its perceived practicality, and thus can be seen as presenting a soft rebellion in section. Additionally, the discussion constitutes the value of such a practice in relation to its coded script and the meaning it can convey among its users. Furthermore, this chapter states the stance of anti-Arabish within the collective group and is followed by a summary of the chapter findings.

5.2 Arabish as a social practice

This study considers Arabish as a social practice through its critical examination of the practice's status and conditions. As such, it understands Arabish in relation to the ways its users produce, reproduce and regulate the practice. Instead of seeing Arabish as an entity separated from its users' sociocultural conditions, norms, their society public discourse and ideologies of language, this study takes a different approach in investigating the practice within the context of these stated conditions. Hence, it constitutes certain values for its Saudi users from Riyadh city, with Arabish as a social practice being the source for distinction and social mobility.

5.3 Soft rebellion

The study finds that these Arabish users are themselves the 'audience', both producing and consuming particular activities (Weber and Mitchell, 2008, p.27). This is seen in the regard of Arabish as a 'movement' and young Saudis' rejection for old forms of communication may have furthered the practice of Arabish. Since I fall within the same age bracket as these participants, I can attest to the desire to break with existing interactive norms and traditions. This break, which I will refer to as a *soft rebellion*, can be regarded as a rejection of older preceding structures as seen in online Arabish discursive practices. For example, Sara (MCG) described Arabish as a movement in the excerpt below:

So (.) IT WAS ahh this was popular among us (.) it was a movement that spread ahh this this amazing language .. this new language so we love speaking this language

The term soft rebellion was used by Liao (2012) in relation to the well-known young Chinese blogger, rebel and racing driver Han Han. Around half a billion people follow his blog, in which Han Han discusses a range of sensitive political topics. Han Han believes that the current social and economic conditions of China are no longer valid for the current generation and thus he discussed subjects such as 'corruption', 'freedom' and many others in his blog. Moreover, most of his writings are controversial and call for a complete absence of rules and formal structures. Although his blog is seen as courting controversy, Han Han's case can be held to be similar to those of Arabish users in a number of respects. The principle of soft rebellion may be seen as a reaction against the standardised language and its linguistic norms. This rebellion, therefore, can be understood as being pitched against what Milroy (2007) calls the 'standard language culture'. It can also be linked in opposition to Piller's (2015) perception of language ideologies as a set of beliefs and norms, which can relate language to society and vice versa. According to Milroy, the standard language is regarded as being uniform in its conception and expression, and governed by a carefully regulated schema. The 'movement' here is thus against the rigidity of Saudi structure, where language ideology is constructed in correlation with the religious ideology and social norms. However, it is important to state that such a perception of movement appeared in the study findings of an MCG user, while on the other hand, Arabish was a natural practice and facilitated the communication of the dialect, mostly by users from the EEG and EG.

Linking such an account to the Saudi public discourse and its duality, it is mostly those of opposed position to the Elite in general that would find Arabish to be a form of resistance. According to Herring (2008), the young generation may possess more social power than those from previous generations, while their awareness of technology differs in that they perceive it as being normal rather than dangerous and threatening. Sara's reference to Arabish as a *movement* in her narration can be indicative of this young social power in rejecting the established communicative norms. Also, expressions such as *among us*, *spread* and *we love* can first reflect the acceptance of Arabish among the young Saudis, and particularly those that Sara referred to. Second, positive attitudes towards the practice such as in the emotional expression *love* may facilitate Arabish's spread among her group, as confirmed by Holmes (2013) who argues that the spread of new practices or linguistic actions is primarily due to and can be accelerated by younger members.

Just as Han Han talked about the invalidity of old Chinese norms and traditions for young Chinese, with young Saudis there is the need for more freedom with respect to social communication. For Han Han the call is for social reform, while for the Arabish users, the call is for freedom of social interaction and communication. Arabish can be seen as an expression of discontent with the conservative nature of Saudi society, its inflexibility and its relative slowness in embracing new cultural and social practices.

Furthermore, Arabish has been regarded in relation to its flexibility as users produce a speech-like dialect. The following narrations reveal that Arabish facilitates Noura's social communications and enables her to express herself, while such a flexibility for Ahmed encourages his access to the practice.

> *and honestly it makes you express yourself more because it's easy for you to Hhh (.) to to talk when it is (.) on your native language .. It's much easier for you to .. it is the way it works (.) I mean I do not know exactly $ but.... you can write what you speak yeah*
>
> (Noura, EG)

> *because I felt it was easier .. well (.) why $ (.) more close ahhm (0.1) to my hand I mean (.) I mean .. I prefer to write this way (.) it is better than Arabic and English*
>
> (Ahmed, EEG)

In this context, it can be argued that, Arabish can deliver two advantages, namely the ability to communicate via the native language and the ease of composition in Arabish interactions. With the latter, such simplicity comes from the Arabish connection to the spoken form, as a user can produce his speech. This shares similarity to Palfreyman and Al-Khalil's (2007) findings, whereby young Emiratis' local communications were carried out in Arabish due to its representation of the speech-like dialect. This again confirms the perception of some participants that Arabish is a mediated practice between the employment of the Arabic language and the Latin script. Any other forms of communication may require knowledge of linguistic norms and conventions, and at the same time they may give evidence, to some extent, of rigid grammatical, syntactical and morphological structures. This is a point that has been shared by different Arabish users, such as those in Ghanem's (2011) study, where young Saudis found Arabish a more convenient mode for self-expression. The use of words such as *felt* and *close* by Ahmed were associated with his physical movements during the interview, when he moved his hands as if he were typing. Physical expression in context came as an assertion to the information produced, in which Ahmed's feelings and closeness to Arabish can be related to his typing skills. This attachment to Arabish can be also attributable to his particular familiarity with the English keyboard, which obviates the need to switch from one script to another when communicating via a particular dialect.

Furthermore, with the lack of conventions within Arabish, I mean in producing Arabic words in the forms of Arabish, through translating one-by-one morpheme, positive classification was associated to the Arabish. In this respect, Noura (EG) expressed her point of view of Arabish, as described the inventors of the practice and its users as 'creative' young individuals.

> *they are very creative ((laughs)) .. they made life easier ((laughs)) .. I mean (.) they want to use the English keyboard .. they do not want to switch and because in the past .. THEY DID NOT there was not ( ) why did it actually start at the beginning? I think there was ( ) there was not an Arabic keyboard ..*

> *you used to do it Arabic (.) THE PHONE when it first introduced it did not support Arabic .. that is why (.) THEY INVENT ahh they yeah .. that is why they invented (.) this language .. so they write using the English letters but speaking Arabic .. I think they invented it ((laughs)) but our generation who invented this (.) not the older one (.) not at all (.) ah never*

Such creativity can be seen in the employment of a different script to communicate the dialect, the 'play' of words and the production of multiple spellings (Tagg, 2015). This creativity, moreover, is apparent in the ways in which the Latin script has been manipulated to accommodate and achieve certain social and interactive needs for its Saudi users. Although, this creative aspect, is not a surprising aspect, these Arabish users are no different from those in Palfreyman and Al-Khalil (2007), Warschauer *et al*. (2007) and Aboelezz's (2009) studies. All of these investigations demonstrated that the practice of Arabish is associated with young individuals who evaluate Arabish as a creative practice. Additionally, Saudi Arabish users' creativity can be said to be similar to other online users, such as those identified in Kalmus *et al.*'s (2009) study of Estonian students and Leppänen *et al.*'s (2009) study of young Finns, where both sets of researchers concluded that since online spaces accommodate a degree of flexibility with regard to structure and content, the creativity of the younger generation is evident.

The manipulation of the script and its disembodiment within online settings to present the dialect of an entirely different language, and moreover a particular Arabic dialect can also be related to the 'playfulness', an aspect addressed by Lee (2007). Such a playfulness was regarded to be a characteristic of young users, and thus in the IM context they were identified in the data as Saudis of 'thirty-five and below not more'. This age range was also identified in Herring (2008), as those who were born in the 1980s and 1990s are the most fervent exponents of the new world of technology and the Internet. Given the social and cultural considerations of the Saudi context, young individuals' creativity is further orientated towards their own particular needs. Weber and Mitchell (2008) point out that old and new digital features interact in a way that allows for the accommodation of new personal and social needs. This can result in the production of new images or text, which at the same time constitute and present certain social, cultural and personal meanings that are situated for a particular group. This is similar to Lee's finding, in which the examined users are aware of the other user's linguistic identity, and thus while English 'particles' are employed with friends, such usage was absent when communicating with users who were not personally known. This playfulness and the absence of grammatical rules that was also found also in the Greeklish context (Tseliga, 2007) and seen to be reflective of its users.

Noura's statement above that Arabish has made life easier tends to lend some credence to the belief that this social practice can achieve both personal and communicative value for some young Saudis. Another perspective, Arabish might also be considered to be evident in the manner in which these Arabish users present global members, who possess the knowledge of English orthography and phonemes and are capable of manipulating the language's script in order to produce Arabic local sounds, such as users of the Greeklish or Singlish. Leppänen *et al.* (2009) referred to this global member in their study as the process of *translocality*, reporting the employment of different linguistic resources including English by young users within the context of Finland. Such *translocality* was reported in the authors' presentation of young users, who were aware of linguistic performances other than the participants' native language. In respect to Arabish, despite the data in general showing that this Arabish was situated to serve the local

communicative needs of its users, their adaptation of the practice can be similar to the one in the Finland context. This is through the awareness that these particular Saudi users may possess in respect to Arabish, a practice that is evident in different contexts and countries. Consequently, their creativity extends to the creation of the dialect form of Riyadh city. Moreover, these users' creativity can be said to be similar to other online users, such as those identified in Kalmus *et al.*'s (2009) study of Estonian students and Leppänen *et al.*'s (2009) study of young Finns, where both sets of researchers concluded that since online spaces accommodate a degree of flexibility with regard to structure and content, the creativity of the younger generation is evident.

Furthermore, factors such as online users' orientation towards their practice, the content of interactions, the need for originality and the amount of time users spend online need to be identified in considering young creativity (Kalmus *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, Arabish users' orientation towards their discursive practices can be noted through their belief that Arabish is a representative practice of this young generation. According to Holmes (2013) the shift to a particular language or a linguistic practice is influenced by individuals' evaluation of the language and the desirable goals to be obtained. Furthermore, the reference to its creators by Noura as *they* show that such a process was not achieved in isolation, but rather was a collective effort. According to Weber and Mitchell (2008), the social construction of particular productions or practices, comprise and require the collective effort of members. At the same time, they point out that such a collective effort would be aimed at achieving connectedness among its members and to others within the shared space. This is, moreover, can be similar to the notion of community of practice by Lave and Wenger (1991) in which Arabish can be seen in similar ways to a constructed community, who shared similar practices, knowledge and common ground. With this effort comes the ownership of the Arabish practice itself by young Saudis, which can be seen in Noura's declaration *but our generation who invented this*, which can be a reference to the ownership of this particular Saudi version of Arabish. This is similar to the notion of the discourse community (Swales, 1990; Mauranen, 2012), since this form of community can be constructed without the need for physical interaction. In this respect, the Arabish users themselves are not only the consumers, but also the creators of this version of Arabish. Another aspect to be discussed is that with the creativity of constructing a particular version of Arabish, presenting the Riyadh dialect and being a movement in the eyes of some of its users, the data indicates the value of Arabish being an exclusive and secretive practice; a point that is discussed in the following section.

5.4 Need for privacy

The evidence of a degree of solidarity and exclusivity in the practice of Arabish could be seen as a cause for concern in a society as conservative as that of Saudi Arabia. Several of the participants advanced justifications for the Arabish solidarity displayed by its young users, namely that Arabish is a coded practice that excludes older generations. In keeping with Kang's (2012) study of Korean immigrants living

in Singapore, Arabish can be regarded as giving expression to solidarity among its users, as Kang found that Korean immigrants practising English, Mandarin and Singlish for certain ends, such as using Singlish for their solidarity from other groups. Being exclusive can thus be a form of communication that excludes other members, such as the older generation in this case. In this respect, Arabish was seen as a medium for conducting personal topics without the interference, for example, of parents. This was stated by several users, as exemplified in the following excerpts:

> *young people should use it (0.2) because old people cannot use it of .. I THINK because (.) you know ah it is not Arabic letters $ (.) hard for them (.) even to learn it now Honestly I cannot imagine seeing someone old using it ((laughs))*
>
> Noor (MCG)

> *if you want to write a conversation and .. you do not want your parents to understand .. what are you talking about I might be yeah .. nice as a .. secret way I mean .. but as I said most of the people who are using this are young .. if my mother is sitting next to me and $ I want to talk to my sister .. and I do not want my mother to know what I am talking about .. I can write this language .. my mother cannot understand it (.) because her English language is very weak she will not be able to understand .. the meaning of number three (.) six and eight and seven .. she will not understand (.) so it can be used AWAY as a unreadable language .. for parents and .. it is possible this is an advantage of this language*
>
> Huda (MCG)

In these narrations, older generation may face challenges in practising Arabish, which mostly centred on the difficulty experienced in becoming accustomed to the manner in which Arabish is employed and in mastering the use of the Latin script. This difficulty may be related to their limited exposure to other forms of communication. As noted, online resources might be more readily accessible to the younger group; for example, instant messaging, particularly among peers and friends contributes to this greater degree of accessibility. This is similar to the 'symbolic distance' (Sebba, 2000) in relation to other social groups, and thus these Arabish users in Sebba's view are practising Arabish 'for themselves'.

Therefore, it could be argued that the limited access of older members to Arabish contributed to their exclusion from this group. Moreover, additional perception is that Arabish affording its users more freedom from parental supervision. Despite Huda proffering a negative view of Arabish compared to the other participants in her group and the other social classes, a point addressed in the following section, she noted that representing a secret form of communication is an advantage of Arabish, a point also found in Palfreyman and Al-Khalil's (2007) study of young Emiratis. Given the rigidity of Saudi social norms and traditions, one reason underpinning the prevalence of Arabish practice might be the sense of unanimity and the younger generation's need for privacy in respect to their communication. Although all the study participants were adults, and who thus no longer require a guardian, in Saudi Arabia the case differs since parents to a large extent continue to play a pivotal role in their children's lives regardless of their offspring's age; for example, educational, professional and marriage decisions are all made or influenced by parents. Despite the fact that this may be considered to be a form of unwarranted interference in the person's life, in Saudi Arabia this is a reflection of the respect and appreciation shown towards parents.

This young's need for privacy and communication can be linked to Kalmus *et al.*'s (2009) findings, where young Estonian online users used nicknames in particular online spaces such as online forums to discuss 'sensitive topics'. This shares similarity with Huda, where she perhaps wished to communicate on a personal topic with her sister without being judged by her mother. Therefore, given the sensitivity of Saudi culture, some themes are forbidden from being discussed or referred to, particularly in the presence of elder members, with the study reporting this as an advantage of Arabish.

5.5 Anti-Arabish

One of the striking findings in this study is the existence of an anti-Arabish stance of an MCG user among the nine participants. The study assumed that since all the participants employed Arabish in their IM exchanges, such a choice of Arabish could be either related to social distinction or social mobility. However, Huda's rejection of Arabish was surprising since she tended to employ Arabish from time to time in her social interaction, and thus the study found that her rejection is based on existent language and religious ideology within the country, which can be seen in the following excerpt.

> *because when I see it written it annoys me (0.2) and two I feel it is ahhh breaking ahhh honestly from the grammar hmm and vocabulary of English so ahh I do not like to talk this way ahhh. I do not like to break the language because you feel that ahh letters next to each other^ they are connected (0.2) .hh and when you read it (.) your mind is programmed to know English language in this shape (.)so fit is hard to read it (.) the SHAPE is English but you read it Arabic .. I FEEL Hhh it annoys my eyes . and to be honest with you WHY do we have to imitate others (.) our language is Arabic and it is the religious language we have to keep it (.) but if everyone is talking this language Arabic will be lost (.) right or not?*

As can be seen from Huda's response, different instances of negativity with respect to Arabish are situated in parting from existing communicative norms, the religious value of the Arabic and imitating others, which might lead to the loss of the Arabic language. First, according to Huda, a person's mind is programmed to perceive the Latin characters within the context of the English language and the employment of such characters to produce the Arabic dialect presents a challenge for its readers. Her emphasis on the expression *shape* can be interpreted in relation to the currency given to the Latin script to present English, and that given to the Arabic script to present Arabic. Consequently, this could cause discomfort as Huda notes that Arabish *annoys* her eyes. A possible charge in relation to the breaking with the language relates to the linguistic conventions that constitute Arabish. However, considering such a finding critically and based on the rest of Huda's narration, these negative attitudes towards Arabish are associated to her accumulated knowledge of the sociocultural conditions of Saudi society. The notion of standardised language was widely advocated in Saudi Arabia, as reported by Ghanem (2011), Allehaiby (2013) and Al-Shaer (2016) in terms of the fear of using Arabish, and thus anti-Arabish members, including Huda, believed in the negative impact of Arabish in the context of eroding the Arabic language.

The religious stream within the KSA, which strongly deprecates practices against the norms, motivate this anti-Arabish stance towards. Huda talked about the negative impact of imitating others, particularly those of different social and cultural backgrounds, in which her narration can be similar to that found earlier in 1998, when a columnist in Al-Yawm was sceptical of the introduction of technology to Saudi Arabia due to the fear of its negative impact on Saudi traditions and norms. Such norms speak loudly to the rigidity of its structure, which fosters right versus wrong and good versus evil. Therefore, the need to preserve Arabic and to transfer its knowledgebase, where retention of the language is dependent on its detachment from other emergent forms of communication that misuse the Arabic script, was a significant matter. Another interesting aspect found in this narration is her phrase *our language*, that can reflect her belief that the relationship between Saudi Arabia and Arabic is proprietorial, or at least one evincing an unusually strong or intimate bond. Nevertheless, the Arabic language is not exclusive to the Saudis since it is the religious language of all Muslims from around the globe. Therefore, his can be linked to the notion of rational choice adhered by Myers-Scotton (1998), in which the choice of certain action - verbal and non-verbal either as a matter of integration or dissociation form a group. Huda's account for the Arabic language as such, can be perceived as a way to detach herself from the Arabish group and at the same time being an integrated part of the anti-Arabish group. Different influential social institutions in Saudi Arabia have contributed in fostering these negative stances towards Arabish, and thus the level of Arabish acceptance even among its users varies. This, accordingly, changes in relation to the individual's perception and ideology of the language, which all fall within and are constructed in relation to the social, cultural and educational background of the member.

5.6 Summary

As such it has been stated that Arabish in general was regarded as presenting the collective group of young Saudis, where such a practice can carry their local communicative needs. This is through its representation of the local dialect of these users, which all come from Riyadh City. Another aspect was that Arabish represents the solidarity this practice gave to its users as such a communicative form was perceived as a coded form for interaction and breaking with the pre-existing social norms in Saudi. However, with this agreed sense of creativity in respect to the local practice the ownership of its practice was presented as a major aspect. This collective view of Arabish is not neutral, and thus previous experiences and social positions construct the users' attitudes towards their practice, namely social and class distinction, as described in the following chapter.

Chapter 6: Social Distinction

6.1 Introduction

This chapter is an extension to the previous one in considering Arabish as a social practice, and thus aims to answer the following sub-questions: How do the different classes approach the practice? In what ways does Arabish serve to sustain a certain capital? Therefore, the chapter begins by discussing Arabish presenting a form of social distinction in section 6.4, in which such a form is related to aspects such as the habit of practising Arabish among certain social group in sub-section 6.4.1. In accordance, this is followed by three sub-sections, which first explain the value of English within the Saudi linguistic and economic market (6.4.2), second, the ways in which this linguistic market structure has been carried to online spaces (6.4.3), and third how Arabish users distinctively utilise linguistic resources within the online field for social distinction, mobility and pressure (6.4.4). The final part of this chapter provides a summary of the main themes considered in this chapter.

6.2 Social distinction

This study adopts Bourdieu's (1984) concept of social class and class distinction, in which 'social class is not defined solely by a position in the relations of production, but by the class habitus which is 'normally' (i.e. with a high statistical probability) associated with that position'

6.3 Arabish is *our way* of distinction

As has been discussed in the previous section, Arabish presents the solidarity of the young Saudi participants. This is in relation to the particular dialect of Saudi Arabia and specifically the dialect of Riyadh City, where these users belong. However, in spite of the data at first showing a harmonious perception of the Arabish practice as a collective practice of the whole young group regarded in this study, immediately after the start of the interviews opposing views and positions were presented. The findings show that this general representation of the collective young group of Arabish is not neutral because of the different social conditions of each user and class distinctions from one group to another. Accordingly, within this Arabish group there are different sub-groups, and while the some of the collective group hold Arabish in high regard, others dismiss such a high status. Therefore, generally speaking the users from the Established Elite and the Elite believed Arabish to be a natural practice for them, and thus it constitutes a major part of their daily interactions. It is over time that the employment of this Arabish variant has become more of a habit for these particular users, which was mostly bound to the user's social class and status. The findings suggest that this choice of practice and its value were further associated with the social and cultural value of the English language, where such a language is significant in the Saudi context. To start with, in relation to the naturalisation of the Arabish practice, users with higher cultural capital and status

attached the practice to the context of their daily activities, which goes beyond the context of communicating the dialect. As such, Amal (EEG) narrated this in the following:

> *.. more of ahh habit I mean ..ahhm (0.2) I use it all the time .. and a part of your personality .. I feel this is the way I AM (.) I feel that each person has his own .. I mean (.) his own way or her own way (.) each one has his own special thing*

The way a member presents him/herself to the social world can be through talking, walking, dressing, texting and many other actions. In the virtual world, for example, according to Amal Arabish is a constitutive *part* of her character, which reflects the ways in which she presents herself within the online field. This habitual practice of Arabish can be indicative of the ways in which Arabish is produced in an automated process. The user in this respect might become familiarised with certain norms and behaviours to such an extent that such actions become a part of his/her daily routine. This habit, moreover, can be seen as Amal's *special thing* or taste, which Sweetman (2009, p.493) calls the individual's 'orientation', 'way of being', beliefs and perception. This personal taste of constructing communicative discourses in Arabish constituted various social values and meanings that goes beyond the overcoming of technological limitations. Social activity, in this respect incorporates the knowledge of that practice and the knowledge of the space conditions where such a practice is taking a part; for example, constructing Arabish to convey personal communicative needs and the ways in which the online field facilitates self-representation.

As it has been discussed in this study, social taste is class embodied, where the social position of a person can determine his/her own style of being and existing. Therefore, Amal's account of her personal style of Arabish as '*the way I AM*' could indicate a greater evaluation and emotion that operates at a deeper level. The personalisation of the practice is based on the habitus, which can be generated based on the user's special categorisation of Arabish as a personal appeal. Arabish in this context is a trait that not everyone necessarily shared. Since each user had his/her own *special way* or trait, the attempt to present a different attribute might, therefore, present a challenge. Furthermore, the regular production of any forms of social activity might help in the affirmation of the knowing of such an activity and to gain the skills required. According to Duhigg (2013) the habit in this case is through daily routine, where actions tend to take place or be produced without the need to think. Therefore, it is only through time that a user can accomplish the mastery of a certain or new practice. For instance, Saeed, a member of the EG, believed that his practice of Arabish is a habitual one acquired over time. This practice came as a substitution to the practice of the Arabic language. Although both Amal and Saeed started the employment of Arabish at the same period, where Arabic script was not supported in all the technological devices, for Saeed (EG) Arabish overcome the practice of Arabic, he noted:

> *This STARTED as a habit ahh that I am used to write Arabish in English .. and then ahhm THEN I forget to write in the keyboard or ahm or phone in Arabic*

The passage of time in practising Arabish seemed to deconstruct other prior practices. The internalisation and accumulation of this practice, its value and the manner of production has affirmed its current position as a component of the user's daily activities. However, the process of constructing or adopting a new

routine might be a challenge, particularly at the beginning of the process (Duhigg, 2013), where such a challenge would vary accordingly from one member to another based on the sociocultural conditions. New practices in this respect can become part of the individual's regime and social orientation, whereby these emergent actions become structuralised within the member's perception and evaluation. However, the substituted value of a social practice over another varies and depends on different factors such as cultural capital, class and social group. Therefore, Arabish has been confirmed and accelerated within the context of the collective group, where a social group performs a vital role in the consideration of certain activities over others. As such, Saeed stated:

> *In social media you are not dealing with ignorant people .. I mean all my friends they speak English and Arabish (.) and ahh (.) in social media we all communicate this way .. most of the young people now they understand they understand all the words and they all talk like this .. Arabish and English too*

Within social institutions such as friends, shared perceptions, actions and attitudes emerge. In this case, the influence of the social group over time leads to internalisation and the embodiment of Arabish within its members. This internalisation of Arabish as the method for communication signifies the group. Since identification is always social (Jenkins, 2008), the social identification process, as such, is constitutive through the comprehending of particular social traits and characteristics (Tajfel, 1981, 1982). This is not only the case within the physical fields, but extends to different fields of interaction such as in virtual spaces, since not every young Saudi employs Arabish or English or both. Therefore, class-based classification comes in accordance influence the social judgments of other groups. This shows the significant role of social norms within this group in which this online field operates at two levels. First, it asserts social ties and the relationship of members already existing in the physical space. Second, with these social ties come the motivation of certain practices and the constraint of others. Such social ties already exist within the Saudi society, entailing mutual obligation and expectation (see Coleman, 1988). Therefore, the employment of different forms other than the ones produced by a group could indicate negative connotations such as being *ignorant*.

These close ties exist in the social space of F2F interaction, and thus the norms of Arabish have been relocated by the same group to online spaces. As such, Reem EEG reflected upon her own experience in the following extract, being a member of a certain *community* that reproduces shared practices:

> *because this is (.) this is the way I found everyone is using to talk (0.2) I found myself in a society where everyone is speaking this way or ahhh .. THE COMMUNITY that I have been living in or still living in till now they are speaking this way .. my friends and everyone around me .. each environment is different than another .. my friends (0.1) my friends (.) we are all the same*

Within a given group, a member has social obligations towards his/her own group. This obligation can be in relation to the legitimate means of interacting and producing Arabish as a form of communication. According to Huysman and Wulf (2004), within a group there is an information channel, where information can flow to all the members. Reem's social ties and the relationship of her group have

influenced her choice and practice. Social information is a key factor in sustaining Arabish as a marker of a special social position. Self-affiliation thus derives from the production of Arabish, in which such a practice is highly valued and nourished within the field of the group and constructed to accommodate certain sociocultural conditions situated particularly for that group. The assertion that '*each environment is different than another*' is class-situated, since online users of other classes or social groups, particularly those with lower capitals, do not possess or reflect a similar value to Arabish. Another finding is that Arabish's status is associated to the value of the English language. Although such a point was addressed across different users, this claim was also put forward by one of the MCG members, Sara, who believed that Saudis who have experienced foreign education or employ a high degree of English for their social communication tend to practise Arabish. This, according to Sara is due to the shared script of both forms, and thus switching between different scripts such as English and Arabic might cause a challenge. As such, Sara stated:

> *.. their hands are very used to the English keyboard ... on English English English so he sees that it is EASIER to communicate with people that he writes (.) with the English Arabic the letters (.) and numbers WHY because .... if he will write this completely in English maybe (.) maybe he cannot deliver his feelings to .. other people*

In this particular case, the intellectual challenge posed for some Saudis in respect to their communications, particularly with other local Saudis, might be related to the need to switch between the two scripts. As such, this might require an extra cognitive process in comparison to others who employ one script only for their communication. Despite the fact that cognitive consideration of producing and practicing Arabish is beyond the scope of this thesis such an aspect would certainly be worth following up in future studies. In the context of English value, the Saudi public discourse of language ideology and the ways in which it is circulated within its structure influence individuals' perceptions. Such perceptions, however, vary depending on how people discuss the public discourse and how they accumulate its ideologies in a power relation context. The accumulation is never neutral, but rather speaks largely to each member's habitus, social, education and family conditions. The attachment between the currency of the language to certain social classes or educational statuses is further fostered through social Saudi institutions. The importance of English not only within the linguistic market, but also the economic market, was found to be an important factor for social and economic mobility, as explained in the following section.

6.4 English value by Saudi members

The reference to the market, in this respect, is in relation to the 'substantial' situation and the 'abstraction' competence in applying the rules of linguistic production, while such rules or structures constitute the value of the production itself, accumulated knowledge and the reproduction of linguistic capital. In relation to English, such a language has obtained a significant value within different Saudi markets, for example, educational, professional, social, cultural and economic. This value came first with accordance to the new

development the KSA has encountered in different fields. Second, the possession of English knowledge advantages its holder with distinctive status and economic gains. These two perspectives of the language, for instance, were the motivational reasons behind Noor's (MCG) decision to enrol at one of the private institutions to learn English. She noted:

> *.. I want to change my job (.) because my job here (.) you know $ (.) private schools low income .. I want to work at the bank (.) but the problem the bank requires a good English (.) perfect (.) SO to be good (.) I entered this institution ahhh (0.2) .. when I FINISHED this course (.) I will apply for the bank and deal with the clients .. high class .. I have some relatives working at the bank and they told me it is nice to deal with them (.) you know (0.2) it is more convenient and prestigious for you .. HOW IS IT POSSIBLE to talk to them (.) if you do not understand English (.) it is embarrassing (0.2) it is it important to have you own prestige in society (.) you do not want people to say you are uneducated*

The value of the language is related to the existent ideology of the English language, in spite of the opposed stream that rejects its learning and use. With the duality of Saudi public structure, different stances thus appear and manifest. The possession of such linguistic capital, accordingly, can be fruitful, a belief that not only can be seen in a concrete manner, but one that was further circulated with the existence of private institutions such as foreign companies, banks and industry that all require this language credential. Through this legitimate educational credential from an authorised institution as Bourdieu described it being a type of cultural capital, such a possession of this ability does not necessarily allow for social elevation. This is particular to the context of Saudi society, where every member knows each other's background and social status based on the family names and material possessions.

Therefore, Noor believed that through her higher accumulation of educational capital she would be able to convert this into a favourable outcome such as a higher salary and high status. The need for self-fulfilment can be linked to the need for social mobility and assimilation. In comparing the three middle-class interviewees, despite their weaker practice of English, Noor showed a higher significant passion towards the language. According to Al-Issa and Dahan (2011) the belief that speaking English offers social prestige is widespread throughout the Arab world and Gulf nations. The declaration to work within the banking field, especially with the wish to deal with high-stratum clients, justifies the high regard towards the English language. This is due to the social beliefs that the employment of the high-class taste would add to the producer's status, and thus facilitates his/her connection and sense of belonging to this group. Social information here plays a vital role, in which reporting positive outcomes can contribute to the affirmation of particular beliefs and practices. The findings showed that it was in Noor's social group that such a belief existed, which was recurrent by her *relatives*, who reported positive experiences in relation to this desired professional position.

This, according to Jenkins (2002) and Sweetman (2009) is the change of or within the person's state and condition inside the physical spaces, which can be through various means such as appearance and language. Therefore, this disposition could be either in relation to the social group of the producer, or in relation to other social groups existent within the market, or both. The desire to learn English, particularly

by some Saudi members, can be seen as an attempt for a disposition in relation to other members within the same group or to low-stratum individuals, through self-representation within the physical field as a member of different high-valued capital. This, in addition, shares similarity to the performance of identity noted by Boyd (2007), in which the individual can convey certain self-images to others through his/her utilisation of different available aspects or resources including language.

The shift of practice here is with regard to social mobility, as such a change was identified by Stewart (2013) to be within the system itself, with the system internalised through the agent's body, mind and social structure; a process of 'structuring the structure'. The assimilation of the high stratum linguistic practices could be explained also, in relation to the enforced social sanctions existent within a certain space or market. For example, the fear of social degradation and public embarrassment such as being an *uneducated* member continuatively generate the production of particular linguistic activities. On the other hand, social status is a deterministic factor in the ways that each member may accumulate a certain form of a capital. This is due to the belief that cultural values are accumulated during the early period of childhood, for example, education and family. The awareness of accepted and rejected performance within the field of IM would allow its users to highlight their positions and classification of other performances. A point stressed by Reem (EEG) was that the accumulation of these different experiences generates the distinctive ways that each user appears in the social space. Reem asserted:

> *.. I am I DO NOT JUDGE (.) but you find someone talks English (.) English (.) <u>everything is English</u> (.) you know (.) (.) he is educated or ah sophisticated .. not only the educational (.) (.) you will know both (.) the educational is related to this (.) because if you (.) if if if (.) and if ahh since you were a child (.) you live in an Arabic environment (,) when you appear in social (.) when you use the social network (0.2) you will use Arabic*

The members' appearance in society, including the language they use, is a reflection of their sociocultural background and thus there is a reciprocal relationship between the social *environment* and *educational* institutions in which each influences the other and seems to produce similar beliefs. As a result, the employment of English in different life aspects generates the perception of an *educated* and *sophisticated* user, a point that has been addressed. At the same time, the employment of Arabic is assumed to be in association with the user's physical *environment* and thus such a practice will be carried out in similar ways to the virtual field. Therefore, the switch to a different practice such as Arabish or English is not justifiable, especially if members of the Arabic *environment* produce it. The social network is significant in approving and appropriating certain languages and actions in society. Therefore, this consideration of the social group has been carried into online spaces, where members of the same group employ similar practices. Moreover, since users of a high stratum confirmed their taste of English and yet justified their practice of Arabish, the following section discusses the manner in which this value of English has been carried from F2F to online contexts.

6.5 Arabish value is associated to the value of English

The legitimacy of practising Arabish stems from the belief that those members who use English on a daily basis should employ Arabish in their online spaces. The data showed that with this belief comes a detachment from the Arabic language by some users in different fields of written and spoken contexts. Despite the impact of globalisation, and particularly its apparent evidence within the Arab contexts where the English language has become a powerful language, such a position has affected the currency of the Arabic language (Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011). Again, this has been thoroughly documented in the literature in relation to the language ideology in terms of sustaining standard language. However, there were different perceptions of who should employ Arabish; a tension that has been noted particularly between the different social classes. To start with, a first condition was the belief that those Saudis who are bilingual and tend to be highly exposed to English should practise either Arabish or English within online spaces. As Reem (EEG) stated:

> *.. YES (.) you have to know English (0.2) the person who is using English English (.) most of his life (.) I mean pure English (.) not the ahhhh (0.4) ( ) will be the same situation (0.2) it is better for him to write either ENGLISH or Franco Arabic*

The disposition of Arabish can be related to the disposition of English within both the physical and virtual fields. English, in this respect, occupies a higher disposition than other practices such as Arabic, particularly among high-class members. Arabish was not only found to accommodate the younger generation's needs in communicating the dialect but, moreover, it is a method to facilitate Arabic communication among those with high competency of English. The employment of fluent *pure English*, therefore, can be attributable to the social group since they practise Arabish. This is a distinctive disposition within the Arabish group, as not every single user articulates similar knowledge or belief. Within the general group of Arabish there is a social hierarchy, and such an online hierarchy can be seen as an extension of the social and cultural conditions within the physical society. In addition, this unequal distribution of social status goes beyond the generation of different approaches and perceptions of Arabish. It involves the matter of ownership, particularly by those with powerful social and cultural capital.

Therefore, the high-class users, who at the same time believe in their possession of Arabish, have significantly averred the legitimisation of Arabish, its users and social group. This ownership of English was also confirmed by users with lower capital compared to those with a higher status. For example, Sara (MCG) stated that for those members who experience a foreign education abroad or in their social spaces, their employment of Arabish or English online is thus a legitimate practice. Moreover, Noor's (MCG) declaration that the commodity of the language represents a high-status member. confirms the ownership of the language by high-class members. This MCG evaluation of such an attachment is related to the accumulation of certain existing norms and beliefs in respect to their class position and the Saudi structure. Accordingly, this extends to the structure of online spaces, where certain practices were assigned high

value; a value that has been derived from the social currency of its users. In the context of Arabish, for instance, in examining the manner in which each user identified Arabish, it was evident that the more cultural capital a user accumulated, the more he/she could be directly linked to the practice itself. Accordingly, the accounting for its ownership by those high-class users was not based on clear-cut measurements.

> *.. it is the way it works (.) I mean I do not know exactly (.) but it is our way (.) ahh maybe because it is easier yeah (.) yeah it is you can write what you speak yeah .. English and Arabish*
>
> (Noura, EG)

> *.. young people can understand .. even if they are not good as us (0.1) ahh but they can speak the basics (.) yeah they have to (0.1) English is a must no question .. but yeah we use advanced words of course and we understand .. I MEAN me and my friends of course (.) ahhm it is easy it is (.) it is I mean easy for us ahh even we understand each other from the context*
>
> (Saeed, EG)

English in this context is a critical point because of the belief that users with high English capital are the legitimate owners of Arabish. Since Arabish, in general, demands the knowledge of the English language basics, for example, the phonetic system, Saeed assumed that all young Saudis should at least possess this limited knowledge. English *is a must* indicated the significant value of the language, which comes from its cultural and social virtue in Saudi Arabia. However, in Saudi Arabia it is challenging to claim that every member possesses knowledge of the language, including this limited knowledge. As a consequence of this powerful position that English possesses today young users, and thus their perceptions, can be influenced by such a force (Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011). Therefore, this perception of the young Saudis in general might be influenced further by this globalised impact of the language and its importance in every field, including IM communication. English and Arabish in a specific field and the duality a user can obtain through the practice of these two forms is due to the appropriateness of these particular forms. In consideration of the IM field's social conditions, besides the knowledge of the required practice that can fall within that field, a user becomes aware of his/her position in relation to other opposed positions. For example, the position of an Arabish user who possesses strong knowledge of English would be dispositioned in relation to the other positions of Arabish users with less knowledge of the language.

The opposition, thus extends to the disposition of one field in relation to another within the virtual spaces. Each field is governed by certain rules and constitutes its own sets, systems, knowledge and trajectories. Therefore, the appreciation and evaluation of any sort of production is subjective and varies depending on the values attached to these productions by both its producers and audience. Despite the perverseness of Arabish in Saudi Arabia, this practice could be appreciated subjectively because of the different social fractions between different virtual fields. It is also conditioned to members existing within the field, who witness the practice itself. For example, within a field of Arabic communicators, Arabish could be considered in the context of its dichotomy to the structure, where such a structure might be nourishing the practice of Arabic. It is thus through the utilisation of symbolic capital that a user upholds in relation to the valuable linguistic resources and symbols that the user can disposition him/herself within the online

sphere. The symbolic capital of Arabish can be seen in the manner in which these Arabish symbols play a vital role in denotating the social power or position of the user. According to Swartz (1997), this form of capital is shaped with the aim of gain and legitimisation, and as a medium for the dominant group to extend and assert their power and position. This ownership of Arabish thus speaks to these high-status users' extension of their social distinction from F2F contexts to the online field.

6.6 Arabish as a lifestyle

The choice of Arabish or any other forms of communication such as Arabic is more related to personal and interactive convenience. Social and cultural appreciation of a lifestyle consequently attained to the construction of a certain field and its mechanisms of operation. The knowledge of mechanisms allows the individual to present himself/herself within a space and to other existent individuals. The symbolic value of Arabish, therefore, differs from the symbolic value of Arabic, and such segment comes from certain social arrangements of a particular structured field. A legitimate practice in a field can be sanctioned in another, and vice versa. Therefore, Reem stated that Arabish is *our talk* while Arabic was not, particularly among her group. The greater provision of two different fields such as Arabish and Arabic could also motivate the disregard for one practice over another. In accordance, Amal, who belong to the same social group as Reem EEG, narrated her dispositional stance towards the Arabic field because of her belief that Arabish is the social marker of her group's taste. During the interview, Amal, attempted to detach herself from the use of the Arabic language, when she stated that she *never* used it. This disposition is related to the cultural knowledge she accumulated and the synchronised evaluation of Arabish and its social meaning. This meaning was furthered and attributed through the strong attached value of English, believing that English is the language of high-class Arabish users and thus presents their daily activities. This can be observed in the following narration by Amal:

> *.. what matters to me (.) are my friends (.) and how we talk like each other (.) because SOME PEOPLE they feel comfortable to talk in Arabic $ and others not .. our talks (.) I mean everyday talks*
>
> (Reem, EEG)

> *.. I don't click (.) with ahh people who do not know how to use it (0.2) that is why ahh all MY FRIENDS are exactly like me ( ) the rest ahh I feel like I can express myself berer .. the way I talk to you (.) is my normal way like what I talk to anyone (.) in general (.) this is how I talk to people close to me (0.2) this is how I WRITE (.) this is how I mention the subject .. so that shows (.) this becomes more than a habit (.) it is not not ahh typing habit (.) it is even how I talk .. even a while ago I was invited in a big occasion (.) and was saying hi to this old lady (.) and subconsciously (.) I said an English word (.) you understand (.) so that is it (.) it is always with you .. I NEVER NOTICE because it feels natural (.) and for me ahh I never wait to see any reaction reaction (.) I feel it is normal I said something normal*
>
> (Amal, EEG)

Although Arabic is an inevitable practice, especially in the context of physical interaction, high-class users attempt to exclude Arabic from their daily lives. This creates the disposition not only in relation to the

Arabic field, but moreover in relation to other users of different, low stratum or even those who possess a high linguistic capital of the Arabic language. Amal's belief that she did not *click* with those who were not aware of the ways of practising Arabish could also be an indication to those with less mastery of Arabish; her reference to a social group or *friends* can prove the exclusion of other Arabish users outside this social circle from her socialisation. This is essentially attributable to the disposition of being a user with a strong knowledge of English, and thus having only a limited knowledge of English means the exclusion from this high group. This view was also reported in Warschauer *et al*. (2007) and Aboelezz's (2009) studies, where bilingual Arabic and English members tended to employ both English and Arabish. It was found that the use of Arabish in these two studies was motivated by similar reasons to those found in this study, that is, to communicate socio-cultural needs among its users.

Arabish in this respect has become a matter of presenting the dialogic rather merely the written form (El-Essawi, 2011), particularly for these high-status members. Therefore, English and Arabish for Amal, is a cultural habit in carrying out all forms of communication, including both oral and written. This social process thus encompasses the interaction between members; for example, family and friends, and between a member and a certain structure of a field. This social influence was noted by Al-Issa and Dahan (2011), where they argued that this transmission process is continuous, since these young members will transmit Arabish to their children in the future. This, moreover, is what Bourdieu (1977) defines as cultural capital, whereby values are transmitted from one generation to another. However, one of the disadvantages associated with bilingual users, in particular with the high regard for the English language, is its influence on the social context that requires the Arabic language. For instance, communication with elder Saudis requires certain traditions and manners of interaction, including the use of local Arabic, especially with greetings. Therefore, the failure or success of conveying a suitable greeting, particularly to older Saudis, is a significant matter in KSA society. Thus, it makes it possible to argue that with high status in Saudi Arabia and the disposition it entails, comes the disregard for other less-privileged practices and aptitudes. Arabish usage, moreover, legitimates high taste in a way that dismisses other's evaluation or *reaction*, particularly of other social groups. For example, Amal's disregard of the old lady's reaction, whether it connotes a positive or negative view of her English greeting production, is an indicator of Amal's stance towards her taste. This shares similarity to the findings that emerged from Ronesi's (2011) study in the context of bilingual UAE students, who stated that for such members the social protocols, including greetings, were more demanding cognitively than greetings in the English language. Although this was not reported in the current study, the employment of greetings as per Amal's case perhaps reflects her strong orientation towards the language.

6.7 Ownership, social mobility and pressure

The recurrent theme of ownership was documented across the narrations of the participants. Attachment and detachment from its ownership were found to be primarily influenced by the process of self-

identification within the online space and in relation to other existing agents. This is a process that according to Stewart (2013) is constructed through the accumulation of a particular capital, which as a result has a significant impact on a user's perception, performance and disposition. With such a finding, sub-groups within the Arabish are evident, not only in a way that existed without its members' awareness, but in some cases these sub-groups are confirmed and sustained through the re-production of certain narrations and beliefs. The consideration of time, moreover, in the mastery of a practice appears to be an important factor in regards to familiarity with its conditions and norms, the latter perhaps not being accessible for new users in comparison to their established counterparts. The types of information and their channels exist distinctively from one group to another, and thus can flow differently within the space, resulting in the communication of certain perceptions from one group to another. In this context, Arabish seems to be motivated and practised by some users due to its perceived positive outcomes and attributes. These associated positive traits enable Arabish users to evolve their position and social mobility, a belief that exists for the lower stratum users. The appreciation of Arabish and its virtue stems from the appreciation of English by these particular members, who noted English as being the language of *sophisticated* Saudis. In addition, the social and economic forces entail being *cool* and *rich* members, further legitimising the ownership of Arabish. Despite this *cool* trait being found to be typically associated with young online users of Arabish in general, such as that noted by El-Essawi (2011), the findings suggest that being *cool* was regarded as one of the high-status member traits. The following statements by Sara and Noor (MCG) reflect their value of Arabish and their acknowledgement of its ownership by *rich* and *cool* Saudis. In this respect, they stated:

> *I mean maybe rich people^ liked to use it (.) I think the cool kids used it more because you know ahh they travel and English .. OF COURSE if you know Arabish you know English .. you still use English you know letter and numbers (.) it is hard .. YES YES I feel it is of course more sophisticated when you write English Arabic .. you know (.) I mean their lifestyle they love English .. this way is easier for them in order to communicate with others*
>
> (Sara, MCG)

> *.. I do not know but the feeling is enough (.x) it is like English .. you write English number and letter (.) so of course (.) it is like the English (.) .. at least it is prestigious*
>
> (Noor, MCG)

Since Arabish indicates a *cool*, *sophisticated*, and *rich* member who possesses knowledge of English, the practice of Arabish was regarded as allowing for social mobility, with such mobility being related to the disposition of its instigators and users, since lower stratum users gain advantage from the available resources within the space for the evolution of status. Nevertheless, this perception of coolness in the IM field is an extension of the existing social classification within the physical spaces. Boyd (2008) pointed out the social order of being *cool*, which is also evident within the virtual landscape. Social order in this context means that not every young member is regarded as being *cool* and that those perceived as *cool* Saudis in the physical spaces can also be seen as *cool* online users. Therefore, for some users, Arabish is a significant method that paves the way for self-expression and communicating the dialect in a way that

accommodates the social taste of these *rich* and c*ool* members. Furthermore, Sara uttering *of course* resulted with an emphasis on the associated conditions, whereby employing Arabish implies a user aware of the English language, rather than knowing English indicating that the knowing component is a primary condition for practising Arabish. This declaration contradicts the belief of many high-status members of conditionality.

At the same time, the reproduction of the practice of this dominant class confirms its legitimacy, power and elevated positions by different members within or outside the group. Therefore, this acknowledgement of the practices of the dominant group and yet the acceptance of its associated classifications can be reflective of the social arrangements within the physical field of Saudi Arabia. Moreover, it reveals the manner in which such arrangements have been materialised within the online space. Social agents, in this respect, might not be able to escape the structural power of a certain social space, and vice versa (Susen, 2014). The appreciation of certain cultural goods such as the English language and its extended symbolic power presenting in the Arabish script is indicative of the operation of this power. As Bourdieu noted, the linguistic market is determined through the appreciation of certain valuable linguistic productions and the practices in relation to such values (Simmons, 2003).

Moreover, in mobilising the user's capital, different encounters need to be considered; for example, the difficulty or some challenges in constructing an Arabish discourse. As a result, this might be because of the knowledge a user possessed and the owners of the practice are the legitimisers of its own rules, and thus as Bourdieu described, they are the qualified 'players' within the field. As such, users vary in their experience of Arabish, and while some may not encounter challenges in constructing its discourse others may experience difficulties. One aspect is that the frequency of employing a certain practice among a social group might contribute to either considering it to be easy or difficult. Therefore, in the case of the lower stratum, where Arabish was not a habit, the reduced practice could perhaps offer one reason for this difficulty, which might suggest limited awareness of Arabish rules in production. Although such difficulties were not clearly stated, with the absence of F2F interaction Arabish users tend to believe that they can present a desired image of how they would like to be perceived.

In addition, one of the study findings was that the practice of Arabish was motivated by social pressure and the fear of being devaluated by other Arabish users. According to Coleman (1988), within social networking and groups there is the matter of sanctioning actions, which are believed to utilise negative outcomes and thus be restricted among the groups' members. Therefore, in association with the striking position noted by Huda (MCG), who is anti-Arabish, she only employs Arabish due to social pressure and the fear of rejection by her own group and other young groups of Arabish users. As such, she reported:

> *.. not so much honestly ahhh I mean my English is not so good so ahh ((laughs)) I try to avoid these situations .. it is so rarely I use English but ahh you know not everyone .. using Arabic hmmm around me (.) not everyone (0.3) .. rarely speak Arabic (0.2) I feel they become or take*

this .. language as a way of PRESTIGE .. plus you cannot speak this language (.) unless you know English

everyone was talking about it so I felt ahhh I mean I was going with the mood their mood .. we do have this belief that if you know this and do it $ not everyone does it .hhhhh but ahh maybe more in rich people I guess their mentality because it is $their trend maybe ahh you know English.. every time when you become $ against the TREND they think of you as ahh an outsider or .. Backward .. or he does not develop himself (.) but they never see this ahh as someone with a principle .. or that you have AN OPINION(.) you are not like them (.) ahhm so you are different because they are following the trend (.) they are developed and $ more civilised and educated ahh but you are not .. I mean some rich .. create this

This can be illustrative of the fear noted by some Saudis, whereby young users engaging with technology develop a preference for practices other than their native language. significant point to raise here is that there were different approaches associated to the relationship between Arabish and English; for example, whether the practice of Arabish means a user who knows English, or whether a user who knows English is consequently able to practise Arabish. The fear of being classified as an under-privileged member as the main trigger for practising Arabish contrasts with the positives attitudes conveyed towards the practice. This is due to the ownership of Arabish and the ways in which the online field in general is structured, particularly in relation to the Saudi society, and within this structure certain perceptions and norms are generated. As a result, Arabish is related to wealthy members reflecting their detachment from its ownership. Therefore, in cases where a user decided to produce opposing practices to Arabish, such as the use of Arabic, such a user might be evaluated as a less intelligent member, particularly if this exchange existed within the field of Arabish. In the KSA, where class distinction and the unequal distribution of resources are evident (Janin and Besheer, 2003), social hierarchy determines the reproduction of certain cultural products. This is all related to the embodied disposition of members with high capital, and thus creates an objective classification of users and the products employed. This reflects the dynamics of different capital and their modes of operation. Consequently, since they accumulate reduced socioeconomic capital some Arabish users such as Huda might feel the need to accommodate the *flow* or *trend* of the *rich* users. The draw behind such accommodation was the fear of being perceived as an *outsid*er, an *uncivilised*, *backward* or *undeveloped* Saudi.

The assertion that *we do have this belief* can be indicative of the reference to the young Saudi group in general, or to a particular social group where within the middle-class circle, Arabish enhances the status of its user and presents a member as being not only a social and cultural force, but also one who enjoys high educational capital. However, capturing these advantages by drawing from the high group cultural capital as it has been addressed is not necessarily the aim of every young Saudi. Therefore, in this case a user averred the struggle in positioning themselves within the IM field, due to their wish to produce other practices than Arabish. The struggle is in fighting the *trend* and goes *against* the stream of the dominant group, particularly within this group's field or the field of Arabish. Feelings such as frustration and anger may be aroused accordingly, such as in Huda's case during the interview, if a user preferred not to follow this Arabish stream. Those users who are supporters of the Arabic language and yet cannot escape social

pressure can thus become trapped between the tension of accommodating social burden and a certain belief that opposes such pressure. However, it is important to note that while these measurements of being *developed*, *more civilised* and *educated* were the classifications attributed to those holding higher capital in a certain field, these categorisations might differ in other fields. By this, if these particular Arabish users enter a field where Arabish constitutes a lower value in comparison to other linguistic or symbolic resources, such users are perhaps perceived as acquiring a lower position.

The symbolic power of Arabish as a result provides its users with an advantageous taxonomy and constrains potential social disadvantages within its field. As Bourdieu defined, different linguistic markets have their own rules, structures and values, and thus legitimate practices in one field can be constrained in others. However, it is important to note that while some Arabish users, particularly those who detach themselves from its ownership, might attempt to produce Arabish for positive gains, such a practice can lead to negative connotations. This is due to the different dispositions within the collective group of Arabish whereby with each disposition there are different perceptions, rules and evaluations. Therefore, not every Arabish production is deemed to be valid or legitimate by its owners, and thus class distinction is involved in activating certain categorisations within this collective group. This is all related to the knowledge of Arabish, its rules and access to this knowledge by advantaged Saudi users. Consequently, the following chapter discusses the claim that Arabish can be viewed as no longer being a signifier of the high-status groups as a result of its widespread practice, and thus a change within the system is required. Moreover, the chapter discusses a new shift within the practice of Arabish, whereby the CS between Arabish and English is regarded as the new signifier of privileged users.

6.8 Summary

This chapter presented and discussed some of the main themes that emerged from the data in relation to this study's examination of Arabish, and particularly in respect of social and class distinction and the ways in which Arabish as a social practice can be manifested in IM settings. With the belief of high capital and users' social superiority and distinction (class) comes, accordingly, the legitimisation of their practice. In contrary, the chapter showed that despite such a belief, which also was supported by the lower stratum users, such users employ Arabish for their own needs. For example, social mobility, evolvement and avoiding social degradation were discussed in the context of addressing the motivational triggers behind the disadvantaged users' practice. The chapter, in addition, postulated the manner in which the Saudi social structure of F2F interaction, which nurtures social divisions, was carried into the online field, and how the value of English is manifested within a socioeconomic context. As has been argued in this chapter, the acceptance and practice of Arabish was not neutral, and thus the next chapter continues the discussion of elitism, knowledge and CS in respect to this study, as well as the ways in which an Arabish user mediates his/her position and knowledge on both Arabish IM settings and during the course of the interview.

Chapter 7: Code-Switching is the New Signifier of Arabish High-Status Users

7.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to respond to the final research question: In what ways does the use of Arabish give rise to associated perceptions and user self-identification, and in what ways does it influence the evaluation of other non-Arabish online users? The chapter begins by recalling the definition employed in this study for the concept of positionality (section 7.1) in order to facilitate a discussion on the study's findings in relation to the notion of self-identification and how Arabish users position themselves within the field, as presented in section 7.2. The following section (7.3) discusses the findings in terms of English value and the manner in which Arabish users evaluate their linguistic capital of the language. Arabish sub-groups and networking appear within the findings and are discussed in section 7.4, while Arabish being no longer regarded as a signifier of the high-status users is addressed in section 7.5. Finally, section 7.6 reflects upon the social power, the participants' position in the F2F interviews, and how they challenged my knowledge. Reflecting upon verbal and non-verbal features such as CS, the use of the lexical phrase *you know* and laughter to signify a particular position are also discussed in this section.

7.2 Positionality

This study applies the term *self-identification*, drawing on Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) principle of positionality, which can be defined as the manner in which a user can make sense of his/her self within a particular field. This position, moreover, was regarded in relation to Bourdieu's concept of habitus, and how the accumulation of a certain capital influences the individual's position. Self-identification has been classified by Joinson (2003) as a type of activity that a person engages with during the identity construction process, which as such is social and thus cannot be treated in isolation from the existent sociocultural conditions. Another definition is that identification places the actor him/herself, that is, the person engages in behaviour that he/she identifies with (Brubaker, 2004), which also constitutes the categorisation of others of similar and shared characteristics; while the relational describes the positioning of the self in relation to others. Internal and external factors play the main role in this process of how the individual sees him/herself in relation to the existing social power of various institutions and ideologies.

7.3 Self-identification and positionality

As has been addressed in Chapter 6, it was believed that Arabish in Saudi Arabia signifies the practice of high-status members, where its ownership by such members was confirmed by the different users from a range of social backgrounds. With such a belief comes the assumption of legitimacy in relation to producing Arabish, for example, regarding a certain production as being either valid or not. As has been discussed in previous sections, within this collective group of Arabish there are sub-groups; therefore, competency within the practice is not something that can be acquired, but rather it is naturally accumulated within certain groups. This legitimisation of deposition is owing to certain existing values and beliefs within the Arabish field or market, alongside knowledge of the manner in which such linguistic resources are applied. The function of Arabish does not necessarily entail identical profits and social gains for its users, because of the unequal acquisition of Arabish and the different accumulations of its rules and its field schemes. This is more evident with the class fraction between both the two groups of EEG and EG and the MCG. To start with, members of the high-class groups noted the significance of the adequate acquisition of Arabish in relation to its practice. It is through such an adequate knowledge that the user would be able to produce a legitimate Arabish practice. Therefore, the discussion in this context is considered from three perspectives: competency in Arabish requires competency in the English language; the user's social and educational capital influences the legitimacy of his/her Arabish, and thus any production in this regard might not be trusted; and legitimate forms of Arabish are those that exist within the exclusive sub-groups of Arabish, and such forms can be only accessed by their members.

7.4 *My English is good*

One of the most common expressions employed to justify the competence and elevated position in respect to Arabish can be seen in this section's heading. *My English is good* was considered to be the conditional requirement to maintain a level of competency necessary for legitimate Arabish production. Within this collective group of Arabish, which the study earlier assumed, and despite its different discursive practices that could result from the users' different backgrounds, it was striking to realise that some Arabish productions could be disregarded. Those legitimate owners of the practice believed that they obtain the required knowledge of Arabish and the mechanisms in which the practice should operate from within the online field. It is, moreover, assumed that their higher disposition than other Arabish users resulted from their extensive involvement with the practice (see Chapter 6, section 6.4.1). To understand this stance, Bourdieu (1984) signifies the roles of family and culture in generating ‘competence' in a specific field. Whether such a field is educational, social or online, the competent individual in this context can be measured in relation to the ways that he/she functions within the space. For example, these high-stratum users who seem to know the ‘game' of Arabish, sustained a higher position within the field because of their access to the knowledge.

Such users' Arabish competence originates from their knowledge of its codes and the social meanings encoded through the representation of English symbols, as a result of being located within the field for a sufficient duration of time. However, this knowledge of codes and meanings does not always present a competent user. If one first considers the role of familial conditions in generating situated values for a certain practice or 'game', Arabish users accumulate these values inversely. Since this Arabish has been associated with the lifestyle of high-stratum members, it is therefore those members that are the most legitimate 'players' of the 'game', possessing the knowledge of its rules, productions, values and significance within the online space. Furthermore, different accounts such as the *very well* grasped knowledge of Arabish *from A to Z* among users with higher social capital were common. It is indeed the case that Arabish is an available resource within the online field that could generate certain profit for some users, such as social mobility and status. However, access to this resource and its legitimate knowledge is conditioned to the different capital a user can intake. Higher socioeconomic capital of the user could extend a further scope into his/her own practice, being able to choose the adequate Arabish, ways of presentation, context of interaction and its discourse function within the field. The following narrations by Ahmed EEG and Noura EG reflect this stance:

> *I know it (.) very well from A to Z (.) ahhm (0.3) I have been using it for a long time now .hhh (.) ahh and my English is good Ahmed EEG .. my English is very good and that is why .. I can write Arabish easily (.) it is not the other way around*
>
> (Noura, EG)

This know-how can be through the ability to consider possible legitimate practices in a given field, the operation of such a field and the sensibility of certain profits. Moreover, despite the attempt of some middle- stratum users for class mobility and social elevation, this attempt is constructed and influenced by their social knowledge. It is through social arrangements and inequality that this particular knowledge varies, such as in the different approaches to conceptualise Arabish and its profits. For Noura, Arabish requires the accumulation of a strong level of English and *not the other way around*, since some disadvantaged users might assume that Arabish presents a user who possesses high linguistic capital of the English language. Another aspect is that such users of the lower social stratums were not aware of this evaluation process among the Arabish group.

Within those who assumed their ownership of Arabish in Saudi Arabia, however, there was tension within their disposition. Although English competency was stressed to be a significant requirement in practising Arabish, it was assumed that the practice of Arabish could maximise the practice and knowledge of English. The employment of English words within an Arabish discourse and the regular employment of the Latin script in Arabish may help its producer's interaction and the evolvement of the English proficiency. The maximising of this learning profit was not necessarily the case among all the high-status users, where the majority reported their possession of a strong competency of the language, with Arabish thus having either a negative or positive impact on their English competency. Despite this being noted by

one of the EG users, who noted that her familiarity with the adapted script of Arabish helped in maximising her English capital and interaction, such a perception by Nouf could be related to her self-identification process within the discussed context. This is due to the first acknowledgement of such a linguistic profit, which was immediately followed by the confirmation that her *English is good.* As such, Nouf stated:

> *.. I felt it can help to learn English more (.) because you have to write English sometimes .. yeah you know how to write ... my English is good*

The generative system within a user (i.e. his/her habitus) therefore, may function distinctively even within the same social group. This is all motivated through the identification process, whereby the individual makes sense of her/himself within interactions (Jenkins, 2002). A user in this respect is producing and interacting in order to represent a particular image or position, where such a position is always located in the process of 'being' and 'becoming'. This, moreover, is through alignment with the group that there is an aspiration to be associated with; for instance, signifying one of the Arabish profits in maximising the linguistic capital of English and at the same time presenting a certain position of being a user with English competency. This social conveyed and portrayed experiences and positions from the physical to online field nourish Bourdieu's (1984) perception of 'cultural nobility'. In this respect, English was perceived as a pre-accumulated value with no requirement for adjustment or enhancement, and thus different accumulation of cultural, social or educational knowledge resulted in different dispositions of individuals. The 'nobility' within Arabish, furthermore, is associated with the 'nobility' of its users within the physical space, and therefore the 'nobility' of English was carried to the online practices.

This, accordingly, leads to the second aspect of Arabish competence, which is concerned with the users' history in relation to their educational and social backgrounds. The division between the KSA schools in relation to their prestige and high status is an extension of the division existent within the society. Therefore, attendants of *one of those schools*, in reference to those underprivileged private ones, were not legitimate for Arabish practice due to their inferior knowledge of the practice. Such low-privileged institutions are established to accommodate certain social groups or those of low economic and social status; while on the other hand, the establishment of the well-known schools goes along with the social prestige of high groups and their economic power. These institutions are in fact reflective of the social structure of Saudi Arabia where certain norms and conditions, including class distinctions, are highly emphasised. The division of educational experiences, according to Nouf (EG), created the division of social practices and their mastery. For instance, she said:

> *.. there was a girl she is not my friend but I know her through a friend .. she does not know English (.) amm I mean she went to I think ahh ( ) I cannot remember the name but her school was one of those schools (.) you know.. she cannot speak English .. and she speaks to me in Arabish .. the mistakes ahkh so terrible WHY why do you speak .. Arabish speak Arabic and I speak to her in Arabic many times because I want her to speak Arabic (.) she insistent to speak Arabish*

As such, there was an apparent deposition and distinction, where those who possess lower educational capital were assumed to be incapable of producing practices similar to those manifested by high groups. These assumptions not only emerged based on the desire to preserve the practice of Arabish by certain groups, but furthermore were related to previous social expectations and appropriateness. By this, some members in Saudi Arabia might be classified and structured within a certain frame based on their background, thus eliminating the possibility of emerging successfully from such a frame. In this context, it was assumed that based on this user's background of attending a less privileged school, Arabic was her only accumulated capital. These expectations and appropriateness, within a given online market or an exchange, would therefore be influenced by already existent social status.

Although there were no clear and apparent measurements noted, the evaluation again of accepted discourse is not biased. This condition of English proficiency does not only consider the language itself, but further it is a referral to the significance of the socioeconomic and educational capital of the user. In addition, *Misspelling,* which was commonly reported in this study by different advantaged users, depended on certain conditions as it was claimed no apparent rules were signified. Therefore, the evaluation of other Arabish productions was based on certain norms and styles that exist within the social group of the evaluator. These styles can be seen as 'typical' conditions, which are according to Jenkins (2002, p.74) where the habitus generates the same practices over time. These conditions constitute certain patterns and beliefs that coordinate the group's position within a field and at the same time, its disposition in relation to the norms of other groups. Therefore, the Arabish user makes sense of him/herself in opposition to others, for instance in terms of the differing styles. The production of other forms than the norms within these high-status users, therefore, would oppose the typicality of existed conditions within their circle.

> *.. you can tell who the person is by his writings .. you judge .. people (.) how do THEY TALK and how do they know .. this language .. if this person is classy or not (.) well raised (.) educated and sophisticated (.) or not .. still I can tell the difference between them .. I mean the background*
>
> (Ahmed, EEG)

Communicative style and the mastery of it are deterministic factors for social advantage, such as being *well-raised*, *educated* and *sophisticated*. It is through the manner in which a written discourse is composed that particular users of Arabish, such as in this case, perceived themselves as being both the detector and evaluator of such production. Such users are the owners, producers and audience or detector of other practices, which was evident on the personal capability in addressing the *background* of a user, and such a user either being a legitimate *classy* member or not. Since Arabish is their way of being within the IM field, they are at the same time the inspectors of this taste. Therefore, if an individual meets certain social criteria, where such criteria have been set out based on the socioeconomic structure of these Saudis' society, this individual is eligible for the high status or *classy*. This social supremacy extends, in addition, to other considerations by these high-status users, who claimed their ability to identify a *good texter* from a weaker one; a point addressed by Saeed, one of the EG members. In respect to Arabish these social

categorisations, biased judgements and legitimisation of class-based practices came along with the belief that a certain produced Arabish discourse should present with no challenges for its reader or receiver, in order to avoid constraining the communication flow. However, these receivers are themselves the evaluators, and thus legitimacy is based on their personal and social nobility and condition. Therefore, this leads to the third consideration in respect to Arabish competence, which was interpreted in terms of how these sub-groups within Arabish possess exclusive capital inside the group itself, whereby such sub-groups are not solely in relation to their discursive practices of Arabish or beliefs, but extend to the employment of CS between Arabish and English as follows.

7.5 Arabish sub-groups and networking

Thus far, the sub-groups within Arabish and their disposition have been discussed in the context of class distinction and superiority of one group over another. Similarities among the EEG and EG groups have been in relation to their positive attributes and association to their Arabish practices, which may be related to certain existing knowledge among these groups. However, different Arabish users, especially those surrendering to the objectified societal structure in Saudi Arabia, may not be able to access these class-situated knowledge and norms. The dispositions of these Arabish users are unequally distributed and the accumulation of its indexical knowledge varies accordingly, from one to another.

Huffaker (2010) each user forms his/her practice in alignment to the group. Positive outcomes and the reputation of this collaborative effort in producing certain Arabish that accommodates the user's close social group or *friends* was an influential trigger in rejecting other opposing forms. This is what Coleman (1988) refers to as the role of networking in sustaining and dismissing certain norms, whereby in this context these particular Arabish users developed a sense of trust within the sub-group of Arabish. These Arabish users, in addition, were no different from the manner that young privileged Nepali Facebook users accounted for their social practices (Sharma, 2012). Another aspect is that with the long period of engagement and assumptions of mastery, newcomers or novice users of Arabish can be detected. This high appreciation of the in-group was characterised as collective narcissism and ‘in-group love' in (cf. de Zavala, 2011). In this respect, members within such a group exaggerated their high regard for their group where they believed in their superiority, and thus had no tolerance for other out-groups such as in the Arabish field of practice.

7.6 Arabish is no longer a signifier of high groups

With the vast spread of the Arabish practice by young Saudis of different social groups, Arabish was not longer considered as a signifier of the high-stratum users. One unexpected finding is that Arabish appeared to have lost its status and high social value, a conclusion that was essentially reflected by both the EEG

and EG users through their accounts of the current status of the practice. Despite the belief that such a practice allows its users, especially of low stratum, social mobility within the online field, such a belief may only exit within these users with lower capitals. It is thus possible to argue that while Arabish is a *cool* practice because of its exclusivity to certain individuals, this *cool* perception remained associated to Arabish among other socially lower sub-groups. The established users of this Arabish strata in Riyadh city, classified new users as individuals pretending *to be cool*. In a different context such as Facebook according to Zywica and Danowski (2008) those users who are attempting to become popular through significant effort to represent such a categorisation were associated with negative connotations such as loneliness. Therefore, concluding that online self-esteem is related to F2F contexts, I would argue that users, and particularly those from the low social stratum, may employ Arabish for the evolution of self-esteem. Problematically, the change or shift of the value of Arabish came in association with newly emerged practices in which they may have *changed* the norms of the practice within the original users' parameters.

Consequently, the perception of Arabish users as *cool* members could be considered in relation to the macro level of the collective group within a wider structure, such as the general online sphere. This perception was confirmed by the high-status users, who expressed frustration and negative emotions in relation to the widespread prevalence of Arabish, resulting in the production of different Arabish norms than those that accompanied its existence and had been accumulated by the established members. Therefore, CS was the new signifier of these users of higher capital.

> *.. there is like stereotyping ahh kind of (.) maybe he does not speak English well .. or maybe some of them are afraid from the wrong spelling ahhm .. so he uses this language OR pretends to be cool .. but at the beginning only few of us use it because they know English*
>
> (Noura, EG)

> *... maybe they are trying to prove something (.) or ahhm yeah it is weird (.) Arabic exists now and it is easy $ for them (.) but yeah they choose not to speak Arabic .. they are not competent with Arabish as well $ very weird .. at the BEGINNING ahhm (.) people who used it (.) were PEOPLE from ahh high classes (.) they speak English and educated (.) ahh they travel so they speak this because it is cool .. you know .. they know how to speak this .. I mean (.) before people were very cool but NOW it is normal*
>
> (Nouf, EG)

Arabish was exclusive to certain members when it was first introduced and practised in the Saudi context. However, the occurred change of perceptions of Arabish comes from its original users, who themselves are no longer solely responsible for its practice. This was due to the social treatment, which was activated in response to the risk of social distinction when detecting newcomers to the group. With the new shared practice of CS among the higher stratum users, there was the need for practice other than that which was classified as *normal*, to allow them to sustain their capital and position within the field. Such a change within the field can be viewed from two directions: first, the shift was in relation to the available linguistic resources within the field of Arabish, such as the employment of English; and second, the preference of

this English resource was generated from its valuable sociocultural position within the Saudi structure in general, its high currency within the Arabish field and being the favourable taste of the privileged users. The raising of class issues and power relation was also reported in the Nepali context among young users due to the increase shift towards online spaces by heterogonous users (Sharma, 2012). Therefore, in respect to these Saudis, their employment of CS, particularly adding English as the language of choice, reflected not only their social value of the language but also its significance within the Arab context. Such use, moreover, facilitated in presenting a distinctive image of its users as being global multilingual users who accumulated the linguistic capital for such performance.

Despite Kobayashi's (2010) findings that online communities such as in the field of online gaming allow for social bridging and connection, where social tolerance towards different groups was evident, in respect to Arabish the case differs. Despite the medium of interaction and the practice studied here differing from the field of other domains such as online gaming, online users tend to establish their own alignment groups. With the issue of class distinctions, Arabish users show no social tolerance, where according to Kobayashi such tolerance reflects an acceptance towards others with different practices. In this respect, there was no tolerance of other less privileged classes in comparison to those of the high stratum in the context of employing Arabish, and thus CS was an attempt to redisposition themselves distinctively within the online field. However, it is important to underscore that this shift of Arabish value and the internee of English within an Arabish discourse may not be a fixed process. In this respect, a reciprocal relationship exists between the field and its users, where the shift of the linguistic market owes much to the social conditions and circumstance, while also being influenced by the manner in which individuals behave within such a market (Simmons, 2003).

> *mix yes yes and it is wrong .. NO I am not talking about myself (.) I mean others because it makes me nervous $to see people writing half and half .. I can mix .. because I am competent in English and Arabish.. we prefer $ if they speak English English or Arabic Arabic .. I mean those people (.) other THAN US*
>
> (Nouf, EG)

The switch of codes between Arabish and English allows its users to carry their daily communicative speech into the online sphere of communication; for instance, the substitution of Arabic words and expression by English terms, and the employment of English numbers to present particular Arabic sounds. One of the reasons behind switching between Arabish and English codes is in cases where a user felt the need to convey a particular meaning that cannot be presented in the Arabish form. In most cases, this related to the substitution of an Arabic term into English, despite such a term being used in the local Saudi Arabic and within the dialect of Riyadh. However, such a switch depends mostly on the user's perception of the word and his/her personal evaluation of the word's capability to present the meaning he/she wishes to communicate. According to Ahmed (EEG):

of course .. I mix I mix English with Arabish .. some words ( ) you cannot write them in Arabic just English .. for example (.) I write here h e r e in Arabish (.) no Arabic word for it .. I am I am I mean for me maybe (0.1) I am different than others (.) I choose some words $ but ahh (.) I mean I am not one hundred percent Arabish

Although the English word 'here' has an equivalent and direct meaning and translation in the Arabic language and local Saudi Arabic, Ahmed's choice is a personal one. However, perhaps the strongest evidence of the switching of these codes can be seen in the following Arabish example presented by Amal (EEG), who showed and reflected the significant value and practice of the English language and CS. This switch, in fact, was evident not only in this written discourse but also in her spoken utterances during the interview. Legitimisation of new emergent practices within a certain field is mostly related to the users' dispositions and its social power within the online space such as in this context of CS. In this respect, the mix of Arabish and English is authorised if the discourse is constructed and produced by *competent* users in which this competency came from the appropriateness of the practice within the structured field, which consequently leads to successful communication. Those who were aware of its norms, knowledge and how a space is manifested thus have the ability to carry out successful or legitimate communication. Again, these *competent* users are the same members who believed in their ownership of Arabish due to their early practice and social status, which can be noted in this context where they also perceived themselves as being the first to employ CS. Certain social norms were thus carried from one field to another in order to sustain superiority over others. Although Seargeant *et al.*'s (2012) study in the Thai context of switching between Thai and English was implicit of some distinction, the reasons behind different choices of these codes were not clear. This might contradict with the findings presented here, since these Arabish users share traits with those economically and educationally advantaged Nepali users who had a tendency for CS to portray a distinctive image (Sharma, 2012).

In addition, this CS has become a natural practice for many high-status users across the two groups of EEG and EG, as some addressed the aspect that English and CS were commonly employed practices among their social groups. This suggests that producing an exclusive Arabish discourse might not be a practice of preference, which might be particularly the case when communicating with outsider users of their sub-group. As such, this could be interpreted in relation to such interaction perhaps risking their social status through the equality of position between the producer of Arabish. Therefore, it could be argued that it seems that certain online fields tolerate the existence of both a solely English discourse and mixed discourse of both English and Arabish. However, with the attempt for social mobility by the lower-stratum users, these high groups would utilise new practices to sustain their superiority and disposition; for instance, the introduction of other languages such as French in case underprivileged users tried to produce similar discourses to Ahmed and his social circle. Ahmed narrated:

some people invent new words (.) you DO NOT KNOW THEM (.) and you do not understand them $ (0.2) they have no relation to English or even Arabic ( ) weird words English with Arabic (.) mixed .. I mean now it is different .. but now for me and my friends (.) we use English with Arabish (0.2) and even our English is different.. maybe they will invent something even new (.)

for example French letters .. I mean with French $ it can be MIXED with English and Arabish you know to be different .. we know $ (0.2) it is easy (.) why not $ ahh of course $ not everyone can speak French .. I mean my friends can speak English and some French

It appears that there have been several attempts by groups opposed to Ahmed's group, which stems from the EEG's attempts to construct a combined discourse of English and Arabish. However, such attempts might not be similar to other produced discourses due to different knowledge, values and positions. Social dispositionality in this respect might be alerted to overcome the assimilation of practices, and thus generate opposed production. Such production, moreover, will be constructed in relation to the values attached to them by its producers and their distinctiveness in assuring the disposition of the group. Therefore, the high emphasis Ahmed puts in his statement *do not know them* was to disassociate himself from those, who attempt to acquire a similar disposition to him and his social group. As such, he believed that the employment of the French language in this case, could be a considerable solution for future need for social disposition within online spaces. The appropriateness of this additional language is related to the sociocultural and educational knowledge accumulated by Ahmed and some of his social group members. Being a member who occupies the knowledge of this language due to his distinctive educational capital, such a capital would accordingly facilitate further social superiority. Bourdieu's (1984) perception of 'cultural nobility' can be evident here each time a user attempts to disposition him/herself through seeking social elitism and distinction. The following Arabish examples were sourced from the context of IM interaction presenting such CS.

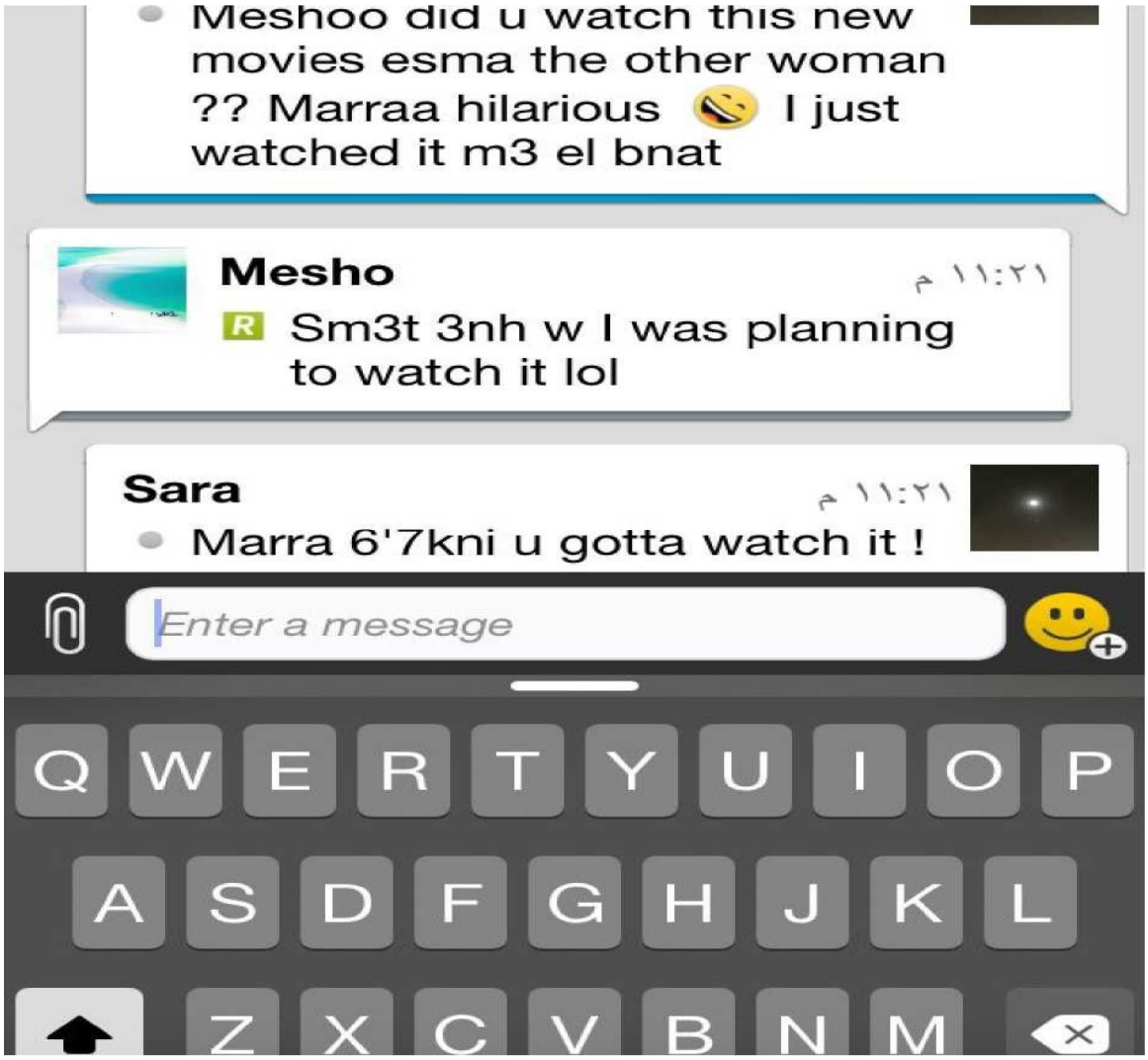

Figure 7.1 Arabish examples I

Figure 7.2 Arabish examples II

As the above examples demonstrate, through the use of English words to construct 'did you watch this new movie', 'hilarious', 'I was planning to watch it' and 'u gotta watch it' in Figure 7.1 and the use of 'sup' in Figure 7.2 as presented in Amal's written example, the participant reflects a strong position towards the use of English as a social taste, which is manifested in every social aspect. This extends to the discussion of young interests such as American films, which echoes Vaisman's (2011a, 2011b) findings where the Fakatsa and Freak online blogging groups presented a cosmopolitan and cultured identity, reflecting upon the American culture. Vaisman's finding can extend to the use of the expression 'sup', where such CS reveals that in many cases switching to English led to the production of certain non-standard linguistic forms. For example, the shortening of words such as *gotta, sup*, *mins* and *wen*, and the use of a single letter such as 'u' as an abbreviation for the pronoun 'you' were reported by Shortis (2001). Such shortening features in certain cases lead to the belief or consideration of these non-standard forms to be a part of the Arabish practice. This point was mostly reported by one of the EEG members, Ahmed, in the way he employed the English abbreviation *sup*. The disposition of these high-stratum users extended to different aspects of their production, including the assumption that producing certain features assimilates the 'native-like' production of fluent English language users. The significance of this disposition came with the aspect of reflecting knowledge not only of the English language, which might not be possessed by other Arabish users, but also suggested insight into western culture, for example. As such, Ahmed, narrated the following:

> *we abbreviate our words .. like natives (.) such as the sup not everyone does the same .. people chat a lot so yeah (0.5) they invent ahh each group (0.1) invent something (.) it is <u>like coding</u> .. instead of saying $ <u>whatsap</u> (.) no need to explain.. <u>you can use it in Arabish in abbreviation</u> .. we said $ it is <u>an abbreviation</u> (0.6) but I do not think of it as English .. Arabish helps to abbreviate words*

The account for the social group again confirmed its influential trigger behind certain representations within the online field. The notion of insider and outsider members of the group was noted by Julie Coleman (2012, p.3), where she reported that 'slang creates in-groups and out-groups and acts as an emblem of belonging'. Therefore, the use of certain pronouns such as *we* were indicative of a different position of this in-group of English speakers in Saudi Arabia and among the Arabish users. Accordingly, this perhaps could create another disposition within users of the English language whereby those who perceived themselves as employing English that was similar to native speakers' production sustained a higher position. In accordance to this, Sharma's (2012) study found that Nepali users deployed similar production such as *u* as an abbreviated form for *you*. Although certain triggers were hard to identify in the Nepali context, in respect of these Saudi users it is plausible to claim that the more an Arabish user benefits from the available linguistic resources that he/she can access, the greater the capital such a user can obtain.

7.7 F2F interviews, positions and dispositions

One of the aims of this research is to critically examine three facets during the course of F2F communication: CS between Arabic and English, the use of the lexical phrase *you know* and laughter. The aim here was to signify the functions of these verbal and non-verbal features within the physical field and how the participants negotiate their position and knowledge in relation to the field itself and in terms of my position. Since I belong to the same culture as the participants, it was important to signify the power relation that might exist. For example, in the context of CS, and as reported in this study, the majority of the EEG and EG members employed English words and phrases during the interviews, and particularly Reem, who had already conveyed great significance to the English language. Drawing on the participant observations, English was documented during their F2F interactions with friends. This is further confirmed by their friends utilising similar practises within these physical spaces by employing this form of CS.

It was found that English in this context is what Bourdieu refers to as the taste that signifies the group's social distinction. With this in mind, it was interesting that certain MCG members negotiated their positions during the interviews, questioning the reasons for not conducting the interview in English. For example, in the case of Sara:

> Sara: *why do not ask me in English? I know English ((laughs))*
>
> Researcher: *((laughs)) I do not mind asking you in English of course (.) it is just in order to deliver the question //*
>
> Sara: *I am kidding ((laughs)) it is okay continue in Arabic yeah it is better Researcher: okay if you do not mind of course*

The question of why the participant was not asked in English was produced in a certain tone to indicate her rejection in a humorous manner. This rejection appeared to be related to her pre-assumption that I would not produce my questions in English due to my personal categorisation of her as being less competent with the language. However, in this aspect of competency and social status, as discussed in this study, all the studied participants' social backgrounds were identified and confirmed by themselves, whereby each user categorised him/herself to me. A similar aspect was reported in Georgakopoulou's (2008) study in his examination of identity claims in the context of storytelling, when a young girl uttered the expression 'I am a little white girl' in a child-like manner. In this context, Sara's question was composed in order to receive an informative reaction or response from myself. It could be believed that such a response would reflect my perception of the other interlocutor and her classification of that user. The evoking of laughter here was considered to be a strategy to soften her request, and at the same time could entail Sara's embarrassment since she had already noted her limited competency in the language.

Additionally, my laughter in this case was a matter of responding to hers, since I had not anticipated such a question. On the other hand, the release of such information of being a capable member to communicate

the language might be an attempt by Sara to present a certain capital such as educational, social or cultural. This, in addition, could be motivated by her knowledge of me being a Saudi member who is competent with the language to an extent as a result of studying abroad and conducting my research in English. Although Sara apparently constructs her discourse in a humorous manner, such a production connotes particular indexical social meanings. Furthermore, despite my efforts to balance this form of power relation within the interviewees Noor, an MCG user, revealed similar feelings to Sara. Therefore, during the interview, she noted her concern of the ways in which I might classify and categorise her statements and actions. For example, in the context where Noor talked about her wish for social mobility, she noted the following:

> Noor: *You might think of me as stupid ((laughs)) or ahhh you say (.) what does she want (.) she is poor and trying to mimic us ((laughs))*
>
> Researcher: *.hhh NO of course ((laughs))*
>
> Noor: *of course of course (.) you will ((laughs))*
>
> Researcher: *((laughs))*
>
> Noor: *no but honestly (.) it is something important to learn English*

The use of humorous responses was in fact, a frequent emerged aspect during the course of the interviews. In Ross's (1998) work, humorous occurs as a collaborative process, where people interact and thus its use varies from one situation to another depending on the context of interaction and people involved. In this context seemed to be a way of overcoming certain feelings, such as embarrassment. This assumed self-categorisation proposed by such users could reflect their identification process through the interaction, which according to Jenkins (2002) is always social and active. There is a cognitive instrument at play as the individual engages with how he/she views him/herself through identifying similarities and differences in relation to other objects within the space (Ibid). Therefore, these categorisations by Sara, and particularly Noor, were their self-perceptions, where such classifications could be influenced by internal and external factors. Furthermore, the three MCG users on different occasions produced basic English terms such as ‘English', ‘keyboard', ‘high', ‘level' and some others, which were repeated during their interviews. The switch in this context could be interpretive perhaps of their level of competency of the language, without the need to assert a certain disposition or CS being the practice of preference.

On contrary, users of high capitals produced large chucks and a whole body of English words and expressions in comparison to the other users of the MCG group or even with other members of different groups and ages, such as the incident with the old Saudi woman. Furthermore, the EG member Noura directed her question in a manner that requested the interview language to shift into English, instead of having her perception examined, which can be attributable to her self-perception of being able to communicate in Arabish. As such, this influenced her position, leading to the belief that she could be competent in meeting my level of language capital.

Noura: *ask me in English please am fine with it //*

Researcher: *aha okay //*

Noura: *( ) it has been long time ( ) I need to practise my English*

The manner in which Noura presented her request differed from how the MCG member Sara presented her request to me, and thus did not include the mechanism of laughter. Indeed, Sara's desire to be informed of the perception I held for her differs from Noura's need. In this respect, the confirmation and sustaining of a certain social position and the commodity of the language motivated Noura's request. *The need to practice*, however, could be indicative of the limited practice and employment of the language, which as a result contradicted with what this user reported during the interview in that English was a constitutive part of her social interaction, including communicating with her father. At the same time, CS was reported in the Arabish example she provided of communicating with her sister. Although Noura did not specify or provide further explanation of the decreased practice of English or the last time of producing the language, her request might be an attempt to perform a certain capital; for instance, linguistic, cultural or educational capital, which could be in relation to the ways she positioned herself within the interview. Furthermore, this can be seen in her position as a knowledge checker of my linguistic capital. As the following conversation between myself and Noura reflects:

Noura: *how are you going to translate the word in English ((laughs))*

Researcher: *((laughs)) ahh I don't know they know each other ahh people who can be close friends or warver //*

Noura: *close ( ) //*

Researcher: *yeah something like that I will provide an explanation of the terms or expressions used in all the interviews ahhm (.) it will be as close as possible to your words (.) for example to show the difference as in formal and informal communication I guess (.) okay let us move to the example you sent*

During the interview, Noura assigned herself a different position than just being the interviewee. This was through her operation as a checker of my ability to provide an accurate translation of this particular Arabic expression. However, despite my definition, Noura allocated herself as the legitimate acceptor or rejecter of the researcher's knowledge. The *close* definition can reflect that such knowledge might not be entirely authorised or validated by Noura. Therefore, Noura's deposition within the communicative discourse with me might be a way to reflect a member with higher linguistic capital. Although, both Noura and myself belong to the same social group, the presupposed power relationship assumed in every form of research can function distinctively in accordance with the discourse conditions.

Another aspect was within the context of the nine interviewees conduced for this study, different users assigned different knowledge to me. Expressions such as *you know* were employed differently by the participants in order to refer to distinguished circumstances. First, in assigning the researcher, as Amal EEG and Saeed EG addressed me as a young member of the collective social group of Arabish. Therefore,

Amal reported to me that *you know they don't get it,* referring to the shared perception that Arabish cannot be produced by elder Saudis. According to Saeed:

> *I think you know now everyone can understand even the basics (.) I mean all young people (.) young people can understand*

This positioning of me comes from their knowledge that I am an Arabish user myself, who falls within the same age category. At the same time, their assumption was that I should hold the required knowledge of this examined practice, and appropriately, would share these legitimatised perceptions with these two users. At the same time, I assumed the social awareness of the Saudi sociocultural structure and categorised practices to be accumulated. Therefore, on other occasions such as in Huda's (MCG) interview the following view was conveyed:

> *.. I think ahh you know sometimes YOU HAVE to when you see someone is using it*
> *.hhh you do not one anyone fto laugh (.) with my friends it is normal .. their trend maybe ahh you know English language*

Huda presupposed that I was aware of the social judgments and objectified classification of users' practices within the online field. My position in this respect was not only as an investigator of the practice, but further as a stored individual of associated perceptions of Arabish and non-Arabish users.

7.8 Summary

This chapter has discussed the manner in which the self-identification of the Arabish users is derived from their social status, and thus social distinction is found to be a significant feature of how each user positioned themselves within the field. The fear of the existing threat towards their social supremacy shifted their perception of the Arabish practice, and thus it was no longer considered as being a signifier for the higher groups. Therefore, CS between Arabish and English emerged as a strategy to consolidate their needs for distinction and to deposition themselves from the MCG who employ Arabish for social distinction. Power relations are seen to coordinate such positions and dispositions, which could be viewed as an extension to the F2F Saudi society, which nurtures this distinction and class fraction. The chapter also discussed how these power relations were manifested during the course of the F2F interviews in order to negotiate position and meaning. Power conflict was also evident and revealed in this chapter in terms of how particular users of high capital challenged my position and knowledge. It is thus legitimate to conclude this discussion with the observation that power relations and class elitism are the main motives behind the positions and status of Arabish in Riyadh city among the nine users that participated in this study.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

As discussed in this research, Arabish is a practice that has been reported in different contexts from within the Arab world (see for example, Palfreyman and Al-Khalil, 2007; Warschauer *et al*., 2007; El-Essawi, 2011) in the context of its significance for its users. Despite this system being initially developed to encode Arabic to Latin and emerging as an attempt to overcome the technical limitations supporting the Arabic script, the evidence points to its continuity in Saudi Arabia having an associated symbolic value. In the past, the use of Arabish typically enabled Arabs to communicate in their native language, since many Arabic letters do not exist in ASCII. At the time of writing, the majority of the existing studies examining this mode of communication in Saudi Arabia (Bashraheel, 2008; Ghanem, 2011; Al-Ghabiri; 2013) are fundamentally limited in their approaches to the practice, particularly due to the absence of in-depth investigation oriented towards Arabish usage in the context of text messages among young Saudis. Moreover, there has been relatively little consideration given to the sociocultural conditions within Saudi Arabia, particularly among young citizens of Riyadh. The complexity of the societal structure in Saudi Arabia, and particularly its public discourse, the existence of religious stream and the differing language ideologies, the duality within its structure and the hierarchy of social class play a vital role in constructing, maintaining or dismissing certain relationships and practices that have hitherto not been investigated in the context of online instant text messages. The aim of this study, as such, was to critically examine the use of Arabish, specifically among young Saudis from the city of Riyadh, through reporting on the phenomena of class distinction, associated perceptions, status and the norms of the practice. My investigation focused solely on instant text messaging among users of the same social circle and across different social groups. As a result, this study has found that different uses and presentations of Arabish should not be examined without the social context.

The application of the Bourdieusian notion of class distinction, whereby the habitus encompasses how people act, position themselves, behave and think within their social worlds (Sweetman, 2009) has proven to be fruitful in answering the research questions. This is due to his theory of society, where he employs the concept of capital beyond material accumulation and gains. This study applied these theoretical perceptions of position and taste in an empirical manner through focusing the lens on the existent power relationships among the nine Arabish users. Meanwhile, since his work considered the Algerian and French societies, Bourdieu's analysis of power relations and the manner in which they can be related and manifested within a social structure and in relation to social changes share similarity to the Saudi context. The aim of this

research was to provide insight into the Arabish practices related to the nine participants' experiences, and to highlight the social mechanisms involved in employing Arabish for distinction or social mobility. Furthermore, in order to signify the social and cultural transmission within the Saudi structure, Bourdieu's notion enabled me to signify the forms of social forces underlying the legitimacy of the practice and its role in class distinctions. This was achieved through one of this study's aims of uncovering the symbolic value of Arabish in coordinating not only the practice itself and communicative discourses, but also in shaping the interactive field where Arabish exists; for example, the existing norms and accepted forms of Arabish communication that include certain conventions that are only accessible to the interlocutors within the interactive IM field. With the perception of social distinctions, inequalities and the manner in which habitus influences the user's position, stance and self-presentation towards the other user or users, the study was able to engage in macro and micro levels of examination.

According to Swartz (2013), one of Bourdieu's significant approaches found across his work is the connection of macro and micro levels of social analysis. Therefore, his notion of class distinction enabled the consideration of Arabish not only as a collective practice of young groups, but also furthered the study's aims of investigating the practice from the personal, educational and class perspectives, and across different sub-groups of Arabish. These different levels were all considered within a practical framework, where the educational mechanisms in Saudi Arabia inclusive of foreign language learning and language policy, and through the practical relationships connecting educational institutions to the social and class structures were all analysed. It was through the dynamic application of these aspects in the examination of the status Arabish that this study was able to capture significant perceptions and beliefs held by a certain number of its users. In a society where English is the only foreign language acknowledged by its policy makers (Payne and Almansour, 2014), the discussion of language power and its influence on the economic and linguistic market facilitated understanding of the manner in which such a policy frames and informs the users' perceptions of their Arabish. Therefore, Bourdieu's notions of habitus, disposition and distinction enabled the three research questions to be responded to as elaborated on below. Initially, I address the first research question in the context of Arabish conventions. In association with this range of attributes to the practice of Arabish and different perceptions, this study attempts to identify a set of conventions, if any, to be found among its users. It is significant to address such a point in this work in order to comprehend the manner in which Arabish communications are conducted and how these users across social classes could compose and comprehend Arabish discourse.

8.2 Research question 1: To what extent are Arabish users aware of the mooted differences and linguistic properties relating to their use of Arabish? And to what extent do they see these as emerging conventions?

In brief, while it is possible to claim that Arabish to some extent might possess certain linguistic conventions in respect to the representation of the Arabic sounds, this remains a challenge to assert within interpersonal interactions, since the conventions in many exchanges rely on the users' personal evaluation. This evaluation is formed and influenced by social ties and networking within each sub-group; for example, Saudi users can produce and reproduce certain practices that situate their sociocultural and economic conditions and needs. It was important for this study to investigate the mooted differences and linguistic properties in respect to the use of Arabish, not only as a collective practice, but further within the different sub-groups. In this study, Arabish is manifested through the employment of the Latin script to convey the Najdi dialect of Riyadh citizens, achieved by employing either English letters that can reflect certain Arabic phonemes or the use of the Hindu-Arabic numbers (referred to as English numbers in this research). The use of these numbers represents particular sounds that only exist within the Arabic phonological system and cannot be supported by employing the ASCII system. However, through such a basic knowledge of the English alphabet and numbers, which can be seen as constituting certain conventions to some extent, the Arabish users employ further conventions of the practice. For instance, despite Arabish defining its user within online fields, in opposition to other non-Arabish users, not every Arabish written discourse can be validated. With tension identified among social classes, sub-groups varied accordingly in their exclusive norms, practices and compositions of Arabish.

Despite the study being unable to present a set of rules in terms of constructing and presenting an Arabish discourse, claims to its 'right' or 'wrong' means of production are made, which reflect class-based assumptions. It is the Saudis with high capital who claimed their right to validate, 'correct' or dismiss an Arabish discourse, alongside certain personal norms they follow in their evaluation of the other sub-group members. A required significant condition for being a 'good' or competent Arabish 'texter' is claimed to be linked to the user's competency in the English language. However, this, in fact, is an additional attempt at elitism and exclusion of other users with lower capital compared to those claiming ownership of Arabish. In Bourdieu's (1984) terms, these Arabish 'players' claim their knowledge of the 'game', which include knowledge of its rules, access to knowledge, existing common values and principles at play, and knowledge of the field schemes. This notion of know-how, moreover, is not personally achieved but rather social groups and networking play a fundamental role in sustaining these different triggers among Arabish users, where each social circle has its own values, attributes and orientation towards the practice. Within the examined instant text messages, there appears to be a mutual consensus between the Saudi interlocutors, who were

either communicating with friends or a family member. No disagreement or conflict is identified that could possibly render their interaction flawed, regardless of the different presentations of one Arabish word to another.

The effect of such connections is what Coleman (1988) refers to as creating a sense of social networking and trust among the group, where actions and sanctions are promoted and prohibited within the group of Arabish and its sub-groups, thus creating a sense of obligation and expectation among its operators. This element was found to a large extent among the sub-groups of Arabish users in the study, and therefore it is these different obligations and attributes that disposition each particular social circle from another. The principle of 'misspelling' is found to be an additional claim for sustaining the division among these sub-groups, and is particularly motivated by the higher stratum Saudis. As has been concluded, since Arabish does not constitute fixed conventions per se, the claim of misspelling is not deemed to be a violation of any Arabish norms. As certain Saudis argued, being the owners of Arabish entail other privileged positions such as the detectors of other practices. Bourdieu (1984) signifies this through the notion of 'cultural nobility', captured in the link between social privilege and status in the physical world and the prestige of being a competent Arabish user; for instance, identifying the user's background as being educated or uneducated, sophisticated or sophisticated, besides other social categorisations. In Saudi Arabia, and particularly within the F2F settings in Riyadh, social categorisations exist and members identify each other based on appearance, status, family names, employment, houses, vehicles, language used and lifestyle. Consequently, evaluation of the Arabish discursive practices countered the sub-group's own practices, and hence no social tolerance for these different practices is evident. This shares similarity with Sharma's (2012) reports of Nepali Facebook users, who present no social tolerance for newcomers or novice users. Social intolerance in the context of this study is directed towards those who possess or can access the 'list' of Arabish.

Although this list is mentioned by high capital Saudis, in fact it is not documented or does not physically exist. The list, in this case, is a reference to the unwritten norms of Arabish that exist within the field of this particular sub-group. With the extensive engagement and claim of Arabish mastery by the high-status Saudis, the middle-class sub-group's practices are dismissed and deemed to be invalid. On the contrary, the study does not report similar stances by middle-class Arabish users towards this other sub-group. Therefore, the emergent Arabish conventions within the middle-class users is a matter of basic practices in relation to customarily employing certain letters or numbers to represent a particular Arabic phoneme. However, the study could not capture certain rules in this aspect since users write what they produce dynamically, and judgment of other Arabish practices is not reported by these Saudis. With this point in mind, middle-class members face difficulties in their Arabish, with the perception of Arabish being difficult to compose being a commonly held belief among their sub-groups. One of the claims is that Arabish requires greater knowledge of the manner in which the English phonetic system works, and consequently producing Arabish

discourses can reflect competent use of the English language. As such, defined norms can be cultivated within a social group and the accepted text productions in one circle might not be deemed so in others. The assumption or claim for competence is not related to the competency in communicating the language, and these users employ such a principle to serve their own ends, including social categorisations, inclusions and exclusions. In the context of CS, the study also reports the absence of rules or conventions, with English terms or expressions produced based on personal preferences. There is a belief that despite the existence of local Arabic terms that can clearly convey the producer's feelings, a substitutive English term is often preferred.

These Arabish users are no different from other Internet users around the world, who manipulate online settings for their own interests and to create similar settings and context to the physical ones. Therefore, within Arabish practices, the reduplication of some English letters allows the user to convey stress, an existing feature of the Arabish language referred to as /shad-da/. Similarly, there is the reduplication of some letters such as 'a' to extend the sound, which is known in Arabic as the unreal quiescence /al-mad/. This is noted in words that are followed by English adjectives or adverbs, although this study cannot claim this conclusively. The manipulation of these presentations and linguistic prosperities that a certain letter can offer to the Arabish users is all afforded through the flexibility of online spaces, such as the one examined here. To a large extent, this enables the participant Saudis to carry out similar spoken practices in their physical settings and facilitates their sense of self within the IM field. Relatively speaking, this CS also entailed the claim of 'native-like' English production, where non-standard, colloquial English such as 'sup' (What's up) and 'gotta' (got to) were reported. Besides, there was also the use of abbreviated pronouns such as 'u' (you) in text message interactions. Through this, an additional position or status is added to those code-switchers, as being both competent in Arabish and native-speaker-like forms of English. CS has, as a result, adds to the commodity of its users and becomes a new habitual practice, in which producing English is not exclusive to their physical practices and extend to their text messaging. Furthermore, this study is able to acknowledge a number of certain conventions, particularly considering the use of English numbers. For instance, although both the letter 'g' and the number '8' are employed by high-status Saudis to represent the Arabic sound /ق/ (these two choices are the only ways to produce this sound), for middle-class Saudis the number '8' alone is agreed to be the common practice.

Another aspect of variation is primarily found in the ways the Arabic sound /خ/ is produced. As such, regardless of the users' background, the use of the number '5', the number '7' with a dot on top and the employment of 'kh' are evident. While the use of these two numbers is found across the sub-groups, 'kh' is solely a common feature among those higher status users of the two classes. The last reported use of numbers is the number '4' to represent the Arabic voiced sound / ذ /. However, this is replicated by middle-class Saudis, while others of higher capital prefer the use of the 'th' digraph to reflect this particular sound

/ð/ as in ‘these’. Moreover, a common agreement across the sub-groups in this study is in respect to the ‘th’ digraph, which can be used for an additional Arabic sound, namely /ث/, which is the sound /θ/ as in ‘think’. To avoid confusion, the Arabish users apply a top dot between the letters ‘t’ and ‘h’ in order to reflect a voiceless /ث/. sound. To conclude, to some extent the practices seem to be a constitutive feature within Arabish, especially in the context of using English numbers. However, this does not restrict the users’ preference of certain numbers or digraphs over others. Despite the fact that this mobility can occur within a certain structure that can afford variable resources, the preferences and choices are too opaque for this study to clearly identify. This is due to the fact that such choices are motived by personal judgment, criteria and norms within the respective social circles. Moreover, with such ranging uses and conventions, it is important to signify the manner in which Arabish can signify a social practice by responding to the second research question.

8.3 Research question 2: In what ways does Arabish function in the field of online written communications as a social practice in Saudi society?

Initially, it appears that the users of Arabish in Riyadh are no different from other Arabish users examined in different Arabic contexts, in relation to how Arabish signify them as young members. Despite the element of being a creative user having been referred to in this study, and notwithstanding the various studies that consider the employment of the Latin script for different dialects across the Arab world (see for example, Palfreyman and Al-Khalil, 2007; Yaghan, 2008; Aboelezz, 2009; Ghanem, 2011; Allehaiby, 2013; Salhani, 2013; Tobaili, 2016), this reference to creativity as collective members of Arabish is later contradicted. With the existence of sub-groups within the Arabish collective, it is a challenge to conduct any particular classification or even categorisation for the whole group. Additionally, power relations are an additional element in which Arabish membership, for example, is measured through the duration of practicing history. Although online users born in the 1980s and 1990s are the most enthusiastic exponents and advocates of the new technological world, the media and the Internet (Herring, 2008), such as those participants included in this study, we cannot ignore the sociocultural conditions of any examination and their consequent outcomes, which accordingly need to be linked to the individuals or spaces involved. For instance, solidarity as a coded practice, in which its encoded symbols and how they are presented could lead to challenges for older Saudi members or authorities such as parents in interpreting communicative Arabish discourses. This is mostly appreciated by members of the middle class as a need to mask their communication through a coded system, although any assumption that middle-class parents in Riyadh cannot interpret Arabish written discourse would require further study to support such an assertion.

The common belief, however, is that Arabish usage can exclude parental interference in personal discussions and sensitive topics carried out between these Saudi participants. This is attributed to both the likelihood of parents having limited knowledge of the English language, such as its phonemes, and the conventions of Arabish: for instance, the use of numbers such as '5' and '7', among others, to represent certain Arabic letters and sounds. This also reveals how Saudi families differ in terms of raising their children, while the extent to which they interfere in their children's lives also varies. Despite the principle of respect that is highly emphasised in Saudi society, including the respect for parents and older members, for these parents to check their adult children's sensitive conversations indicates a different interpretation and presentation of respect in Saudi society. In other families, respect does not conflict with giving their adult children personal privacy and interference for example, which can be seen in other matters such as marriage. Different socioeconomic and educational conditions are a component that contributes towards the manner in which these Saudi parents and their children interpret social obligations and manners. With this in mind, in a society with a rigid structure and primarily influenced by strict sociocultural norms, Arabish is nevertheless regarded as a movement by young Saudis to break away from pre-existing traditions, particularly in terms of communication. In this study, I have labelled this process or shift as a 'soft-rebellion', in which Arabish symbolises the social power of youth culture.

In the field of digital media studies, and as has been reflected in this study, many may disagree with viewing this soft rebellion as a movement, or online practices such as the Arabish produced by the Riyadh members as a creative practice. Despite this argument, I believe that in each context we examine it is important to account for its conditions from all aspects, taking into account Saudi society and its long history of rigidity and legitimate practices, as well as its public discourse, religious stream and language ideology, where the existence of Arabish in Saudi Arabia and its continuity can signal this young movement. However, it must be acknowledged that their soft rebellion is a shift that in fact has occurred within a pre-existing structure of the social hierarchy. By this, I mean that Arabish users utilise the available linguistic resources to communicate their dialect, where such a practice is already evident around the Arab world. This is through initiating a change within the system of online interaction, particularly within the instant text messaging field, and shifting the associated perceptions of the space.

Notably, the flexibility of electronic device platforms and the manner in which new and old digitals devices came together allow for the accommodation of new needs; for example, in the case of the young Chinese rebel Han Han (see Liao, 2012), Saudi users portray their rejection of the existing traditional modes of online communication in society. In magnitude, Arabish is the rejection of the grammatical rigidity of a standard language and its linguistic norms regarding syntactical and morphological structures. Some participants express the need for originality that can stand opposed to the common agreement of what is socially acceptable or dismissed in the interaction, and to resist the existent language ideology of

standardisation. Arabish is a mediated practice conducted between those who do not possess the required typing skills or speed to compose either Arabic or English language interactive messages. In general, being a competent speaker of the Saudi Arabic language in F2F spaces does not necessarily imply being a competent online user of the same language or dialect. Arabish, as such, has fulfilled particular communicative needs for those users with poor typing skills when using the Arabic keyboard. Although typing skills are not the focus of consideration in this study, some participants refer to their poor keyboard skills to indicate their limited Arabic skills, particularly in the case of those users with high status and educational backgrounds, where the English language is mainly promoted and employed in daily tasks. Arabish here is preferred over the English language, since the latter fails to convey a full sense of the local terms, while social needs, interests and significant topics prevalent among young online users (see for example, Warschauer *et al*., 2007) can be discussed successfully through Arabish.

Maintaining the flow of the conversations for these young Saudis is found to be a significant matter in order to reach a mutual understanding in terms of their synchronised IM exchanges. Therefore, the ease of Arabish manifested in how it presents a speech-like dialect where users can write as they would speak. Likewise, with some participants, Arabish is found to be a mediated practice for those who appreciate and associate a strong value with the English language and its script, while not necessarily possessing comprehensive knowledge of that language. The absence of fluency in respect to English is a contributing factor for some of the Arabish users, who either wish to mask their limited competency in the language, or who aspire to communicate local expressions. To a large extent, Arabish helps those with low capital in the language, namely middle-class Saudis, to present a more global and cosmopolitan image through their manifestation of English numbers and letters. These attempts again demonstrate how Saudi society functions and how many Saudis infer social categorisations into their different practices, even at the micro level; for example, this appreciation of the elite language, namely English, or the fear of social judgement and how social pressure can compel these Saudis to employ Arabish confirms the social mechanisms that shape its people's practices in myriad ways. However, even with these attempts at social mobility, the middle-class use of Arabish is rejected by both the Elite groups, who expressed that Arabish is their mode of communication and thus they initiated this practice for their own social groups. Power conflict and social inequality contribute to the field of IM exchanges, since it mirrors F2F settings.

One striking finding is the existence of an anti-Arabish user within these Arabish participants, and thus for this participant the practice of Arabish is only motivated by the fear of social judgment, such as being deemed uneducated or uncivilised. The Saudi society structure encourages such social classification, which is primarily based on physical appearance, materialistic conditions and the individual's taste. That is not to say that Saudi society adheres to or encourages the shallow perception of its members, but social categorisation has long been internalised within its structure, and has been supported by the existence of

tribal backgrounds, where family names and familiar history are an important component of social classifications. To conclude, the value of Arabish has always been in transition and thus its status is influenced by who is employing it, or in other words, by the status of its users. From its first appearance in Saudi Arabia until the period of this study, Arabish has been a social means for categorising its users and maintaining social distinctions. This finding, moreover, contributed to the response to the last research question in this study, as presented below.

8.4 Research question 3: In what ways does the use of Arabish give rise to associated perceptions and user self-identification, and in what ways does it influence the evaluation of other non-Arabish online users?

With the common belief that Arabish presents the collective young group of users, being modern, cosmopolitan and competent in the English language, the study has found that social and class tension appeared among them. My initial assumption when embarking on the data collection was that the variation in producing Arabish, including the CS between Arabish and English, could be attributed to the different social and education backgrounds of its users. Meanwhile, regardless of these variations it was assumed that Arabish would still be significantly appreciated by all the Saudi participants and could help to elevate its users' status. However, this research concludes that in certain contexts Arabish is no longer a signifier for high status members, where this shift of value from presenting cosmopolitan users to no longer signifying users with high capital was instigated by the high-stratum Saudis. This one surprising aspect contradicts the initial assumption in this research, and this shift manifested as a result of the increased employment of Arabish by heterogeneous users. More than a decade ago, and in tandem with the rapid uptake of internet use in Saudi Arabia, Arabish symbolised not only the young age but also the elitism of its early users. However, the literature does not document this Arabish history in Saudi Arabia, or in Riyadh city in particular. When comparing the history of Arabish first usage across the three social classes, it appears that those with high social and educational capital are the pioneers. In turn, sub-groups are found to exist among the collective Arabish group, and thus various and opposed values emerged. In this respect, early Arabish users appear to have had initial access to the internet in Saudi Arabia, while it is widely accepted that during the early boom of the internet, not every Saudi family could afford a computer or mobile phone due to their high price.

The early employment of Arabish is also related to the significance of the respective social group and the tolerance its members demonstrated towards the practice, although this was not the case in the public discourse surrounding technology when it was first introduced into the country. The habitus, which according to Bourdieu is interpreted as a set of depositions within the social agent (Webb *et al*., 2002;

Sweetman, 2009), comes into play in understanding the division between these Arabish sub-groups. Therefore, while some middle-class Saudis employ Arabish for social mobility, appreciation of the English language and social prestige, others within the same circle felt compelled to practise Arabish in order to avoid social judgment and rejection. These are the main triggers behind the practice of this particular sub-group. Moreover, it is found that within this particular sub-group, divisions existed and ranged between supporters of Arabish and resentment of the practice. As such, it is a challenge to draw conclusions on middle-class users' perceptions or appreciation of the phenomenon. Meanwhile, and in opposition to the collective sub-group of middle-class members in general, high-status Saudis confine themselves to their own sub-group in order to disposition themselves differently from others. Social status and the current individual's position within the field of F2F interaction are the main triggers behind evaluating Arabish, creating and sustaining its distinction in general. The owners of Arabish are those early users themselves, and this claim of ownership is validated and assured not only by these higher stratum Saudis, but also by others of the middle class. There appeared to be a mutual consensus across the three researched social groups that Arabish is a legitimate practice for wealthy online users. Likewise, there is a strong association between the economic wealth of the Arabish users and their claim of its rights, being the creators of this particular variant of Arabish employed in the city of Riyadh.

Consequently, they are the legitimate producers and evaluators of their and other Arabish performances that might exist within the online field in general. One the other hand, the middle-class users do not attempt to claim their right as owners of Arabish, and the only intention is to assimilate the practice of these wealthy and 'cool' Saudis. Personally, I found it surprising how these particular users are to some extent subjected to social class norms, despite their early acknowledgment of Arabish being the practice of wealthy Saudis. Moreover, the Arabish users' self-esteem and belonging is mainly associated with and affiliated to their own social circle. Being a member of a group entails the production of similar practices in order to avoid being rejected by the other members, for example among the middle-class users. Virtual spaces, particularly instant online exchanges via WhatsApp or BBM chat, I found to be an assimilation to the physical world of these Arabish users, an observation that has been underscored in the literature (cf. Wood and Smith, 2010). These particular spaces allow for interaction between friends, where an individual could convey his/her own social interests, distinctions and status. Furthermore, they enable sharing and thus confirmation of certain status among a social circle in a way that echoed existing F2F norms and perceptions, which are assumed into their online exchanges in a similar fashion. The Arabish users in this study are found to follow their groups, even in some cases such as one middle-class user who reports a general rejection of the practice.

Although this created division among the collective middle-class members in respect to the perceptions, the fear of social judgment by their own group eventually motivate the Arabish production of one opposed middle-class user. This is due to existing beliefs within each social group, namely that Arabish users are

'educated', 'cool' and 'sophisticated' individuals; while on the other hand, any 'outsiders' of the group are labelled as 'ignorant' Saudis. The investigation in this study has facilitated understanding of the relational mechanisms of these sub-groups, in which power relations and class distinction reveal how their dispositions towards each other are constructed. New media, including instant messaging spaces, afford the consistent needs of its participants, in which Arabish users shift their positions in accordance to the required emergent disposition towards the outer sub-groups. Social class plays a vibrant role in alerting these positions, as in Bourdieu's view such a shift takes place when new events suddenly occur within the field under consideration (Navarro, 2006). Moving from Arabish being the taste and 'natural' medium of communication for users with high capital to the practice of young Saudis in general called for the need to adjust the forms to be communicated in the text messages. Therefore, CS between Arabish and English emerges as a means to accommodate this new position of high-status Saudis and to oppose the pre-existing Arabish practices. Reduced social tolerance towards newcomers to the Arabish group is noted, particularly those with lower capital or who are classified as merely affecting being 'cool' Saudis. In this respect, Saudi social structure and its existent hierarchy is carried into the virtual spaces, and thus each online social group's position is regarded as an extension of its corresponding position in the physical world. As a result, CS is the new signifier of these wealthy Saudis, at least by its creators.

In line with Jenkins's (2002) observation of the existence of power relations for social distinction, competition over the available linguistic resources within text messages is evident. In terms of the collective Arabish group, Saudis' discursive practices reflects this symbolic competition over resources to ascend the social ladder. Therefore, one can argue that online spaces and in particular instant text messaging are in a constant state of flux, where the dynamic of the users' relationships, perceptions and productions change in accordance with new emergent positions and dispositions. While some of the participants still believe that Arabish allow their social elevation and equality to high capital members, others dismiss such a claim. Furthermore, despite Arabic being the official formal language in Saudi Arabia and its official dialect form being that employed by all its members, whereas the majority of the middle-class members consider Arabic as a language of preference in different contexts, the high-status members of both groups do not reflect such a view. For the middle-class users, their position towards Arabish is a matter of self-affiliation within their particular social group and the broader collective group, through utilising Arabish as the source for their social mobility. On the contrary, for those elite users, self-affiliation stemmed from the high support of their sub-groups. With this in mind, it is plausible to consider associated perceptions towards non-Arabish users in general, particularly with these different stances. The study thus discovers that variations also existed in categorising other Saudis in the non-Arabish user domain. For example, Arabic language users are perceived by some of the Arabish users as being 'uncivilised', 'backward' and 'undeveloped' Saudis.

Such negative connotations of the language and its users could be related to Saudi norms of language policy and how existing social and educational institutions are exploiting major factors to legitimate that policy. To understand this aspect, two perspectives are considered: First, in Saudi Arabia there has been insufficient consideration of how to preserve classic Arabic and to create opportunities to motivate its learning. Second, although language policy is applied in every Saudi educational institution, ideologies in relation to the language are interpreted differently from one context to another. These language ideologies exist within the duality of the Saudi structure, since while the religious stream supports the use of Arabic language as being the language of the Quran, and thus rejects the use of English, the Saudi economic field requires the mastery of the English language for the socioeconomic advancement of its members. Social status and economic wealth come into the fore in constructing these ideologies, and thus are internalised within existing Saudi members inside these organisations. Taking into account how private and public Saudi educational and economic institutions or markets operate, English is favoured to the detriment of Arabic. Although Saudis with lower capital for example, and specifically middle-class members, do not dismiss the importance of the Arabic language, English is valued highly in the context of enhancing their wealth, profession and status. However, social obligations such as Coleman's principle discussed in this study are not absent and Saudis that switch from Arabish to Arabic are reported to meet certain social requirements. The shift to the Arabic language for text messages emerges as a matter of social obligation and expectation, particularly when communicating with elder Saudis as a form of respect, even by those Arabish users who reject its use. Another case for the Arabic switch appears within a communicative discourse of Arabic users by middle-class Saudis. Likewise, this does not escape the need for distinction, in which Saudis of higher capital also perceive themselves as being competent users of Arabic.

The contradiction in stances between not employing Arabic due to its linguistic difficulty and being less accustomed to the language and the required high competency reflect the need to preserve a higher position than others. Furthermore, another unexpected finding in this study is the existence of an anti-Arabish stance within the Arabish group itself. It is well known that the Arabic language comprises religious capital, since it is the language of Islam and some Saudis could shun the Arabish practice for such a regard. This stance is driven by the fear of losing the original language through the attempt at becoming a cosmopolitan individual, alongside concerns over the morals and identities of young Saudis and Arabs. Saudi authoritative groups or members are themselves the policy makers, or as Milory (2007) places them, the guardians of the language. As discussed in Chapter 2, the religious stream in Saudi Arabia possesses social power, with one of its aims to preserve the language by diminishing the appreciation of foreign languages over Arabic. This, again, has varied based on the individual's social and educational stances, and thus diverse influence results from this stream. Related to the topic of self-identification and position, one of the study aims was to shed light on power relations during the course of the interviews. Despite my efforts to balance this form of control, such a power existed in different cases between myself and some of the participants across different

classes. This power operated in different ways: the need for my approval of their knowledge, the need to check my perception of their social position and as less competent users of the English language, or the confirmation of their powerful position as a competent user of the language, and being the checker and validator of my knowledge.

Therefore, laughter was found to be a strategy for avoiding embarrassment, or the need to affiliate with my position as a researcher, which was mostly evidenced by the middle-class users. In my case, laughter, constituted personal surprise at the questions and positions proposed on particular occasions, such as stances that were not expected from some participants. On contrary, the high-class users do not demonstrate similar positions, but rather one of them challenged my knowledge as a researcher and translator of the Arabic language to English, and commanded that I propose my research questions in English. Furthermore, the use of 'you know' as a phrase constitutes social and cultural indices, either assuming that I share a similar position and perception to the participant, or through being a Saudi member who is aware of the sociocultural conditions. I found it very interesting how power relations unfolded during the course of the interviews, as well as during the observations, including the language used, topics discussed, appearances and social surroundings. The high-status members switch between their Arabic and English, despite the variant extent in their CS, and this switch further extends to discussing social topics and interests during the social gatherings and expecting me to understand and participate, since they assume that I share a similar position. With the middle-class members, however, the case differs, as English is employed in a very limited capacity, such as producing several words rather than a chunk of sentences. In terms of appearance, I noticed a shared taste and appreciation that varies from one group to another, while at the same time there was an expected stance that I would share their taste, particularly among the high-status groups. Again, this speaks loudly to the Saudi social structure and how people assign themselves and others within the same fields through various positions.

8.5 Research aims and contribution to the field

In my view, this study makes a contribution to the field of sociolinguistics and digital studies, particularly as it pertains to Saudi society and its distinctive constitutive attributes. The exploration of the social dimension has proved fruitful, in that individual actions are coloured by and predicated on the underlying social context. This research thus differs in three main ways in its approach to Arabish when compared to other studies that have examined the phenomenon. First, in light of the paucity of research in terms of the use of Arabish by Saudi online users, the study investigates its use in Riyadh city from a sociocultural perspective, taking into account class distinction, Saudi public discourse, the religious stream and language ideologies existent in the nation. Second, the study focuses on Arabish users from a diverse range of social and educational backgrounds in order to arrive at a more considered, in-depth and nuanced understanding

of these users' experiences, which has thus enabled me to take suitable account of the complexity of the issues. Third, this study extends beyond a strictly linguistic examination of the phenomenon, although the linguistic component is considered. As such, it considers the use of Arabish as a practice, which to date has not been dealt with in the same manner by other studies. The sociolinguistic perspective, which adopts a microsociolinguistic approach through utilising CDA, has furthered the investigation of the manner in which Arabish is regarded as a practice that preserves the high capital of its users, and how this practice value has shifted in accordance to various sociocultural factors. Therefore, this study can be regarded as a contribution to the field of sociolinguistic studies, including the digital studies field, and particularly the field of instant text messages among young online users. With the lack of studies regarding Arabish, and through uncovering certain sensitive aspects such as class distinction and elitism in Saudi Arabia in general and in Riyadh city specifically, I believe that this study can be a reference for understanding its complex social structure, class hierarchy and social power mechanisms.

8.6 Limitations and future work

To start with, this study suggests that future research is necessary, particularly due to the challenges of engaging with a small sample size, such as that found in this research. As has been discussed, the aim of this study is to illuminate nine Arabish users' practices and to investigate the associated perceptions, status and positions in relation to their Arabish exchanges with friends and family members. The aim is not to form any broad generalisations from the study's outcomes, neither regarding Saudi users of Arabish from Riyadh city nor in relation to the practices of certain classes. Therefore, I believe that through the incorporation of the sociolinguistic approach suggested in this thesis, and by considering a larger dataset or online corpus, future research may benefit from considering different groups and sub-groups of Arabish. In addition, the main aim of this study is to investigate Arabish in instant text messages among close relationships and social circles, as opposed to analysing the participants' practices in other online channels such as chatrooms, for example. Therefore, investigators could also explore different online spaces, considering platforms popular among young Saudis such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat in order to explore the modality of Arabish production in different fields. However, researchers may encounter several challenges in conducting and recording long interviews with Saudis (Payne and Almansour, 2014), which may be related to the manner in which the field of research is perceived and the fear of exposing identities. In such a case, I suggest that besides assuring the participants of their confidentiality, researchers can apply various methods in investigating Arabish, such as: surveys and questionnaires. Accordingly, this will benefit the field of sociolinguistics, and particularly those who are interested in online practices in Saudi society.

Another suggestion is that further studies could apply different methodologies in their approaches to the practice. For instance, comparative studies or examinations of Arabish across different Saudi regions, different dialects, various social groups and classes or ages would help in understanding the manner in which Arabish functions in different local spaces. The main dialects in Saudi Arabia, such as Hijazi Arabic, Najdi Arabic and Gulf Arabic, beside other minor ones, need to be addressed in respect to the ways they are presented and manifested in Arabish, and the extent, if any, that its functions are informed by new sociocultural conditions. Another aspect that future studies may also consider focusing on regarding Arabish is in relation to its evolution over time, and whether new practices will emerge. One of the challenges in this research field is that the findings can be seen to be satiated to a certain time when the data were gathered, from which two observations can be made. First, it is impossible to assume that this study's findings are conclusive over time, especially when Arabish users may index unpredictable changes in the future in terms of how they manifest their practice. Notwithstanding, a change in perception, evaluation, and even status may occur among different Arabish users not only over time, as is evident in this study, but also in accordance with the unprecedented social changes Saudi Arabia has recently encountered. This leads to the second aspect, whereby in light of such changes, it is impossible to predict the consistency of Arabish as a practice of young Saudis and its values. Consistency here refers not only to its future in Saudi Arabia, but also the regularity of usage by Arabish's established or new users. The assignment of a young Saudi government, where all its figures are educated figures, has enabled such a drift in the national social and political policy.

On the 29th September 2017, the ban of women driving was lifted, which is of particular importance since the restriction was based on certain traditions instead of formal law. Social changes can influence the Saudi structure and thus its members' practices in general. At the point in time when this study first commenced, Arabish was regarded by a number of its young users as an attempt at breaking with the old and rigid norms in Saudi Arabia that were felt to no longer serve the youth's needs. It is thus asserted in this thesis that Arabish is viewed as a soft-rebellion against social structure, a structure that coordinates individuals' activities and actions, including the manner of communication. Therefore, this social transmission encountered by Saudis is shedding light on these significant changes, with further studies required to consider the youth's reactions to such a process, including their online communications. Moreover, a new Saudi Vision 2030 has been introduced and implemented by the Crown Prince and Chairman of the Council of Economic and Development Affairs, His Highness Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud. This vision constitutes fundamental sociocultural and economic changes of the Saudi structure, such as a thriving economy by promoting foreign investment, encouraging culture and entertainment, connecting the three continents of Africa, Asia and Europe and creating a young vibrant society that is open to other cultures. Therefore, this process towards a novel and innovative future could impact Saudi tolerance for other languages, practices and cultures, and consequently, current communications including within the online

fields will have an impact on the English language, besides other languages would be significantly appreciated in the society since the country, in fact, has started inviting major foreign organisations in different fields.

With all these possible changes in the future, it might be a challenge to predict whether the structure of the social hierarchy and elitism in Saudi Arabia will be fundamentally affected through this transition process, particularly in this early stage. However, a change in gender rights and the shift towards a greater degree of social equality is a significant development. This is not limited to the right of driving, but extends to males and females' rights to mingle in public spaces for educational, professional or social purposes. As such, manners of communication may change, evolve or vary in physical spaces, and the constitutive social circles of both genders may also now emerge online. For example, one suggestion is that in the field of gender studies, although many studies have examined gender separation in different Saudi fields (see for example, El-Sanabary, 1994; Baki, 2004; Wiseman *et al*., 2017), gendered online practices were not reported, particularly within the context of Arabish users. Therefore, I believe that a gender-oriented study to investigate Arabish users' linguistic manifestations of the practice and associated perceptions is needed to highlight any similarities and differences, which should prove to be a fruitful area of future. A further suggestion is the possible link of this gender approach to different Arabish users of different social classes, in order to attempt to understand the gender mechanisms and operations in each social group. Another aspect is that given the current social tolerance and acceptance of women's rights by young Saudis and many members of the older generation, including some religious figures, research of Arabish in the Saudi Arabian context needs to account for its sociocultural conditions, public discourse, religious stream and language ideology over time, and to document these unexpected historical events.

Consideration of the anti-Arabish group stances and their views towards the Arabic language might include the need to revive the language' and sustain its standardisation. It is particularly evident through highlighting elder Saudis' perceptions and the religious stream's attributes towards the employment of the Latin script for local Arabic that future studies should account for existing language ideologies and the manner in which these principles have evolved or changed since this study was conducted. In one of the major conferences in Saudi Arabia, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud announced the need to change the rigid and extremist perceptions of Islam, since in fact the religion calls for moderation and the acceptance of others. These modified religious attributes will be a constitutive aspect of the re-formation process emerging at the time of writing. Therefore, future studies should capture the possible shifts and stances of religious figures and groups in Saudi Arabia towards young online practices. Furthermore, linguistically speaking, researchers will need to explore CS between Arabish and English in order to ascertain what changes are taking place in current practices. This can also help to rationalise CS between Arabish and other possible forms in the future, such as the use of Arabic or other languages with Arabish.

Young Saudis can be innovative in terms of composing their online communication, with one study participant suggesting that CS between Arabish and the French language could be a future possibility. Some young Saudis are keen to engage with foreign languages, such as the high school students in Payne and Almansour's (2014) study who utilised their mobile phones and online forums for such learning. Therefore, future studies need to register the evolvement of Arabish, including its continuity or erosion over the passage of time.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Translation of Arabish Examples

Example 1:

La yashy5ah !	No way !
Ee wallah ma gltlha	Yes I really did not tell her
Looool	Looool
A7san tstahl	She deserved it
7raaaam 3leek	Poor girl

Example 2:

7bebty khlas I did it	Darling it is done I did it
Wallah thxxx	Really thank you
Wsh d3wa	I have not done anything much
Tdreen eny knt shaylah HAM !	I was very WORRIED !
Walaw t7t amrk	Anytime

Appendix 2: Code-Switching Between Arabish and English in the Saudi Context

(Source: Allehaiby, 2013, p.54)

Translation:

Hi 5o5a keefek?	Hi Khokha how are you?
Hi Dee Tamam AlHmdulellah! Enty kefek?	Hi Dee am fine Thank God! How are you?
Al7amdellah. Keef aljam3ah?	Thank God. How is university?
So far alHmdulellah YaaaaaaY it's Friday	So far thank God YaaaaaaY it is Friday
Esh 7atsawee on the weekend?	What are you going to do on the weekend?
Ma 2adry. U?	I do not know. U?
Ray7aa shopping!	I will go shopping!

Appendix 3: Code-Switching between Arabish and English in the Egyptian Context

> I found no one. YES MAL2ETH WALA WA7ED RA7
> Keep it up ya shabab
>
> (Aboelezz, 2009, p.12)

It is worth noting that theses Latinised Arabic words here represent the spoken Egyptian dialect (Aboelezz, 2009).

I found no one. YES MAL2ETH WALA WA7ED RA7	I found no one. Yes no one has gone
Keep it up ya shabab	Keep it up guys

Appendix 4: Research Sample

This appendix presents the details and information of the ten participants

The Established Elite Group (EEG)

Participants	Ahmed	Amal	Reem
Age	26 years old	24 years old	22 years old
Schooling	-Private school (well-known) - Summer school abroad	Private school (well-known) – Summer school	Private school (well-known)
University	Private university at one of the Arabic countries.	Private university in Riyadh	Public university in Riyadh
Qualifications (Bachelor Degree)	Business Management	Interior Design	Still studying
Higher Degree	None	None	None
Proficiency in the English Language	Advanced	Advanced - Superior	Advanced
Professional Occupation or Career	Works at his father's company - no specific occupation was given	None	None

The Elite Group (EG)

Participants	Nouf	Noura	Saeed
Age	25 years old	24 years old	28 years old
Schooling	Private school (well-known)	-Private school (well-known) - Summer school abroad	Private school (well-known) - Summer school abroad
University	Public university in Riyadh City	Private university in Jeddah City	Public university in Riyadh City
Qualifications (Bachelor Degree)	Art	Human Resource Management	Dentistry
Higher Degree	None	None	Master of Science in Dentistry - orthodontics
Proficiency in the English Language	Intermediate - advanced	Advanced	Advanced
Professional Occupation or Career	Self-employed fashion designer and owner of a fashion brand	None	Co-owner of a company, he and some of his male relatives established

The Middle-Class Group (MCG)

Participants	Huda	Noor	Sara
Age	26 years old	27 years old	25 years old
Schooling	Private school (less-known)	Private school (less-known)	Private school (less-known)
University	Public university in Riyadh City	Public university in Riyadh City	Public university in Riyadh City
Qualification (Bachelor Degree)	Computer and Information Science	Business Administration	Special Education
High Degree	None	None	None
Proficiency in the English Language	Intermediate	Intermediate - Advanced	Intermediate
Professional Occupation or Career	Computer-science instructor at a public university	Information administrative in a less-known private school	Accountant in one of the private companies

Pilot study - A member of the Elite Group (EG)

Participant	Latifah
Age	25 years old
Schooling	Private school (well-known)
University	Public university in Riyadh
Qualification (Bachelor Degree)	Business Administration (management)
High Degree	None
Proficiency in the English Language	Advanced
Professional Occupation or Career	None

Appendix 5: Information Sheet for Participants

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Research study 'Arabish in Saudi Online Written Communication: A Sociolinguistic Study'.

We would like to invite you to participate in this original postgraduate research project. You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

-Aims of the study

This study aims to look specifically at the use of Arabish in Saudi Arabia, particularly among members from Riyadh City. It also investigates its influence and effect on Saudi users' perceptions in general and identification of the self and others within the instant messages exchanges. In addition, it aims to give a detailed insight into the societal forces, which led to the introduction of Arabish in Saudi society and continue to affect its evolution and development. This will be through the examination whether the value of English contributes to the practice of Arabish in any way. Participants in this study will be young Saudi male and female users of Arabish from a diverse range of social and educational backgrounds

-Who is being recruited?

Participants will be Saudis of mixed age (20-30) range, gender and social backgrounds who use Arabish on a daily basis.

-If you agree to participate in this study, please note the following points:

- I will be conducting an interview with you, which might last for up to an hour, and which will be audio-recorded using my personal recorder.
- The time and place of meeting will be entirely of your choosing.

- A week before the interview, question sheets will be sent to you by email or by any means you choose in order that you might have a general idea of the type of questions to be asked and so that you might have an opportunity to consider the subject matter beforehand.
- Few days prior to the interview, you will be asked to send an example of your Arabish communication. You will decide the suitable way to send this example.
- On the day of the interview, you will be asked to sign a consent form indicating your agreement to participate in this study and acknowledging your rights as a participant in the research.
- During the interview, you can at any point, stop the recording if you no longer wish to participate.
- All personal information you provide, including your name will be completely anonymized and remain confidential throughout the entire duration of the study.
- Your words maybe used in text form. However, this will not compromise the confidentiality of your identity and personal information.
- All the data you provide will be stored in encrypted form on my personal computer for the period of my research and will not be accessible to anyone but me.
- It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw from the study without giving a reason at any time up until the 1st of December 2014, which is the date of the final stage of data analysis.

-Arrangements for ensuring anonymity and confidentiality

All the data you provide will be completely anonymized and will be treated with total confidentiality. Data will not be accessible to any other person. I alone will transcribe the interview and the audio-recording will be deleted after transcription. All the information about you will be completely anonymized and thus, a pseudonym will be used at all stages when presenting and analysing the data.

If you have any questions or require more information about this study, please contact the researcher using the following contact details:

Researcher: Mashael Alanazi, MPhil/PhD student.

Department of Education & Professional Studies, School of Social Science & Public Policy, King's College London, Waterloo Bridge Wing (Franklin-Wilkins Building), Waterloo Road, London, SE1 9NH
E-mail: mashael.alanazi@kcl.ac.uk

If this study has harmed you in any way, you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

Primary Supervisor: Dr. Martin Dewey, Senior Lecturer in Applied Linguistics

Department of Education & Professional Studies, School of Social Science & Public Policy, King's College London, Waterloo Bridge Wing (Franklin-Wilkins Building), Waterloo Road, London, SE1 9NH
E-mail: Martin.Dewey@kcl.ac.uk

Secondary Supervisor: Dr. Simon Coffey, Lecturer in Modern Language Education and Applied Linguistics

Department of Education & Professional Studies, School of Social Science & Public Policy, King's College London, Waterloo Bridge Wing (Franklin-Wilkins Building), Waterloo Road, London, SE1 9NH
E-mail: simon.coffey@kcl.ac.uk

Thank you

Appendix 6: Consent Form for Participants in Research Studies

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH STUDIES

Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research.

Title of Study: 'Arabish in Saudi Online Written Communication: A Sociolinguistic Study'

King's College Research Ethics Committee Ref:

Thank you for considering taking part in this research. The person organising the research must explain the project to you before you agree to take part. If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

Please tick or initial

- I understand that if I decide at any time during the research that I no longer wish to participate in this project, I can notify the researchers involved and withdraw from it immediately without giving any reason. Furthermore, I understand that I will be able to withdraw my data up to the 1st of December 2014.

- I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be handled in accordance with the terms of the UK Data Protection Act 1998.

- I understand that confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained and it will not be possible to identify me in any publications.

- I consent to my interview being audio recorded.

Yes	No

Participant's Statement:

I agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the study. I have read both the notes written above and the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research study involves.

Signed Date

Investigator's Statement:

I _____ confirm that I have carefully explained the nature, demands and any foreseeable risks (where applicable) of the proposed research to the participant.

Signed Date

Appendix 7: Preparatory Questions

These key points are just a preparation for you before your interview, please think about these points.

Pre-Interview questions

1- Your first use of Arabish and why

2- Any disadvantages or problems you experience from the use of Arabish

3- Your opinion and personal evaluation of Arabish and non-Arabish users

4- To what extent can you identify personal characteristics of a particular user based on his or her way of communicating Arabish? Can you think of examples?

5- From your personal experience, do you think you can tell the person's age by how they use Arabish

6- Do you think your use of Arabish is linked to the way you see yourself as a Saudi individual?

Appendix 8: Interview Questions

1- Can you provide a personal account of when did you use Arabish? Why? How often? And with whom? And what does it mean to you to be an Arabish user?

2- Do you think using Arabish has affected your perception of yourself as an online user? If so, can you explain in which ways it has affected or influenced your perception of yourself as an individual and of other online users?

3- How much do you think Arabish is presenting the Saudi dialect? Are there any linguistic rules in the way you are using Arabish?

4- In your Arabish communication do you switch to Arabic or English or do you communicate in Arabish all the time? If so, can you tell me when you switch? and what are the reasons motivating such action?

5- In your communications, do you often communicate with Arabish or non-Arabish users? Which do you prefer most? And why?

6- How far do you think elitism and status in Saudi society play a role in your perception of Arabish users including yourself and other online users? Please explain.

Appendix 9: Arabish Example Questions

- What is the particular reason behind your choice to present this particular Arabish example?

- To what degree are you aware of the meaning of the symbols and other marks you employ in your Arabish texts?

- Which particular symbols do you consistently employ? Why? What is your understanding of the general or universal significance and conventions attaching to that symbol?

- With respect to the following Arabish words employed in your examples what is your understanding of the general or universal significance and conventions attaching to thos e Arabish words?

- With regard to your mixing of English and Arabish words what is your understanding of the general or universal significance and conventions attaching to this mixture of Arabish and English words?

- With respect to the use of signals and marks what are the significance behind their production and what is your understanding of the general or universal significance and conventions attaching to those marks?

Appendix 10: Transcription Conventions

Transcription conventions are used following Hutchby (2001). Symbols and their meanings are as follows:

(.) A dot between closed brackets indicates a pause of less than one second.

(0.1) A number between closed brackets, indicates a pause of more than one second and the number insider these brackets indicate the number of seconds.

( ) Empty brackets between lines show that unclear utterances or noises have occurred during the course of interviews.

((laughs)) Double enclosing brackets illustrate non-verbal activities such as: laughter

CAPITAL Capitalised words means that such words have been uttered louder comparing to other words.

// Indicates overlapping utterances or talk being interpreted by the interviewee and the researcher.

$ Rise or Fall pitch across phrases.

.hhh Indicates inward breathing, the more the h's the longer is the breath.

Hhh with no dot indicates outward breathing, the more the h's the longer is the breath.

{ } Arabic and English letters and sounds used in the interview are presented between these two brackets.

<u>word</u> Underlined words indicate the quotation of English words, expressions, numbers and sentences. It also includes the quotation of Arabic terms and letters during the interview.

[ ] Words between these two brackets show the closest English translation of Arabic terms, expressions and letters uttered during the interview. Also, it shows an explanation of Arabish sounds presented by English numbers.

? Question marks used at the end of the sentences indicate a question.

Appendix 11: Transcribed Interview 1 – Amal

Date: 7th of June 2014

Duration: 34 minutes and 20 seconds

Social Group: Established Elite

M: okay (.) let us start okay (.) when did you first used this ahhh

AM: ahhh ((laughs))

M: ((laughs)) so when did you use?

AM: FIRST TIME (.) friend of mine taught me this in high school

M: aha

AM: I learnt it in a chatting room (0.2) it was strange (.) I said what this new language is

M: hm

AM: yeah true $ (.) and then she explained to me (.) that this is ARABIC IN ENGLISH letters (.) and there are letters they put in English numbers like that ahhh three and eight

M: hm

AM: and that was long time ago (.) maybe two thousand and five or four maybe six five not sure

M: and you still use it

AM: yeah of course (.) ahh more of ahh habit I mean

M: what do you mean?

AM: ahhm (0.2) I use it all the time

M: do you use Arabic?

AM: NO

M: never

AM: I do not like it (.) I TOLD YOU ahhh it is like like a habit and a part of your personality

M: what do you mean//

AM: I MEAN EVEN WHEN I TALK (0.2) half of my talks in Arabic and English

M: aha (.) ahhm so do you mean TALKING or writing?

AM: both

M: okay (0.2) so when you talk//

AM: I always mix (.) with ahhh talking in Arabic and English $ and write Arabic and English

M: so $ you write Arabic?

AM: NO I mean Arabish (0.1) I mix

M: okay

AM: for example $ I wrote to you [This Arabic word means ‘a lot' in English] funny $ all in English but [This Arabic word means ‘a lot' in English] is in Arabish and fUnny $ is an English word

M: and how do you write [This Arabic word means the word ‘a lot' in English]

AM: it is easy (.) m a double r because of the stress on the letter and a

M: aha

AM: ( ) as we said before

M: so when there is ahh a stress on the letter (.) you double

AM: yeah

M: in all the words ( ) or only this

AM: mmmm (0.3) there are other words hmmm (0.1) I don't know any letters you want to stress

M: okay and is it only you (.) I mean doing this//

AM: NO I swear (.) I noticed alot of my friends (.) they do the same this for example (.) when they want to type something $ ahh they want me to feel something for example A HIGH TONE or something (.) they write the letter in a capital form couple of times (.) I had that friend $ I swear (.) BEFORE FEW DAYS she wrote rrrr (.) r w a (.) and then maybe five rs (0.5) and I WHEN I read it (.) I felt that she raised her voice $

M: hm

AM: felt real (.) as if someone is really talking

M: okay (.) so it feels as in face to face?

AM: exactly

M: hm

AM: you got the ahhh (.) message (0.2) their style (.) their talk how (0.3) ahh I mean if they are serious or not

M: and you do this//

AM: yeah (.) mostly and I mix (.) especially if they have nothing to do with this (.) they do not in Arabic (.) I HAVE that friend who do not speak Arabic at all $ so I use this only English (.) ahh if someone understand Arabic I MIX (.) ahhh and if ahh someone does not understand English (.) ahh I know someone who does not know English but knows all the letters (.) he can read $ (.) ahhh I write this Arabic English (.) SO IT DEPENDS on the person you are talking to ( ) you are chatting to

M: so ahh (.) it is not necessary to know English $ to speak Arabish

AM: NO I know this person (.) who does not know how to speak English but she writes always always in Arabish

M: aha

AM: she knows but ahh (.) not as one who KNOWS ENGLISH

M: what do you mean $ (.) ahh can you explain//

AM: AHHH (.) I mean ahh (0.2) it is different if you know English (.) I really don't know how to explain it (0.2) but you can know

M: okay (0.2) sooo (.) do you mean the letters or the//

AM: I mean everything (0.2) YOUR WAY $ (.) style (.) even the words you use
M: hm
AM: for example the t h (.) ahh if you wana say [This Arabic sound equals the voiced English sound 'th'] or [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a voicless 'th'] you have two choices $ (.) t h or number 4 ahh (.) but if wana say (.) t h you need to put apostrophe between them
M: ah okay (.) and how about this friend of yours ^(showing her Arabish example)
AM: yeah she puts four
M: and you?
AM: NO t h
M: she got you//
AM: yeah yeah (.) she does all the way
M: hm//
AM: but IMAGIN (.) if I write one word in English $ (.) she does not get it
M: aha okay (.) I see
AM: ( ) what a looser
M: oh (.) ahhh and how do you feel//
AM: to be honest (.) I don't click (.) with ahh people who do not know how to use it (0.2) that is why ahh all MY FREINDS are exactly like me ( ) the rest ahh I feel like I can express myself berer
M: hm
AM: they can get me immediately $ (0.4) it is not like when I am writing letters in Arabic Arabic or only in English (.) no ( ) mixer up a lirrer
M: so you only click with people like you//
AM: YEAH (.) and ahhh I feel this is the way I AM (.) I feel that each person has his own ahhh (0.2) I mean (.) his own way or her own way (.) each one has his own special thing (.) FOR EXAMPLE (.) I have friends who like English all the time and other like to mix like me
M: hm
AM: SO each one (.) you have to go along with (.) ( ) to feel $comfortable enough
M: so no Arabic//
AM: ME (.) yes I do sometimes FOR EXAMPLE if someone $ I am trying to deliver my point (.) and that person writes always$ always Arabic Arabic (.) I switched ahhh this the keyboard to Arabic (.) ahh no mater no mater what I said $ (.) I do not feel that I deliver exactly what I want to say (.) ahh but I only do this (.) and normally with old people (.) cuz you know they don't get it
M: hm (.) WHY//
AM: that is it (.) ahh THATS the way I know it (.) I do (.) talk to people (.) so that it is and if I tried to $ deliver my massage to someone in his own way (.) I am like this (.) it is hard I feel I cannot deliver what I want to say
M: hm (.) but how about when you talk to Arabic users $ I mean your age//

AM: hmm (0.7) I don't know (.) I mean I don wanna sound shallow or ahhh judgmental (.) I mean there is also this person (0.1) ( ) ((laughs)) God have lots of persons (.)ahhh always write Arabic (.) and then I said ahhh it has been million years now and you ahh still the same $ ahh you have nothing to do with this $ ahh (0.4) she said no WHY (.) because she said its weird (.) its childish (.) ahh its not normal

M: hm

AM: its not Arabic or English (.) you got it

M: hm

AM: SO I did not like it (.) I do not know why (0.2) ahh and the people who are not USING IT (.) ahh for me ( ) personally I wouldn't click with them (.) and they doesn't seem normal $ to me

M: hm

AM: at least they should know how (.) it is two thousand and fifteen and YOU DONT know HOW $ (.) thats how I see it (.) I mean why not

M: okay (0.3) hhhmm (0.1) and why do you think they don know it ? I mean is it difficult or//

AM: look most of the GIRLS and boys (.) ahh I mean young people (.) these are the people who are using it the most (.) not old people BECUASE they think its its cool and hip $ its something new

M: hm

AM: its interesting (.) and we always look at the new things as the most good ones $ and beautiful (0.1) and its classy and educated (.) SO the people $ that (.) it is out of your hands that you feel they are missing alot (0.3) they are living in another world

M: the ones who are not using it?

AM: yeah (.) you feel like they are living in a different world (0.2) they are living in the same environment and there is nothing new in their lives (.) there is no interaction with like ahh their society

M: okay ahh//

AM: it REFLECTS that they do not understand $ or maybe they are a bit ignorant (.) OR ahhh (.) THEYR open to new things (.) or living in the same circle or something (.) OR ahh I mean maybe seem boring or not that classy

M: hm

AM: maybe

M: okay (.) the conversation

AM: mm

M: the one you sent

AM: what about it

M: why did you choose this particular one?

AM: hmm (0.2) .hhh(.) Hhhh okay (.) I choose this conversation because it is real $I did watch this movie (.) and e was funny e was hilarious (.) and like like (.) I am telling her (.) look you would like it (.) and ooooo (.) what else//

M: okay//

AM: its real

M: and here you you mixed (.) you used Arabish and ahh English

AM: the way I talk to you (.) is my normal way like what I talk to anyone (.) in general (.) this is how I talk to people close to me (0.2) this is how I WRITE (.) this is how I mention the subject//

M: ( )

AM: you you (.) like when you TALK TO ME now (.) you can see that half of my talks is in English

M:hm

AM: so that shows $ this becomes more than a habit (.) it is not not ahh typing habit (.) it is even how I talk

M: hm

AM: you got it (0.5) even a while ago I was invited to a big occasion (.) and was saying hi to this old lady (.) and subconsciously $ I said an English word (.) you understand (.) so that is it (.) it is always with you

M: and what did the lady say?

AM: ahhh I NEVER NOTICE because it feels natural (.) and for me ahh I never wait to see any reaction reaction (.) I feel it is normal I said something normal (.) I did not care

M: okay (0.2) and do you do this (.) always ahh I mean with elder pe//

AM: yeah (.) I never noticed (.) I guess

M: okay (.) and the person who you talking to ahm (.) in this conversation (0.2) does she $ also use the same way of you?

AM: she does yeah (.) sometimes she uses English English and sometimes t she writes Arabic (.) she uses pure English and ahhh sometimes t she mixrup (.) ahhh and also her way of writing is different a little from my way (.) but we are all the same (.) friends

M: in which way

AM: my way (.) how I write the letters ahh like I might write [This Arabic word means ‘God' and in this context ‘I swear'] like h a or maybe another person w a double l a

M: and how do you write it?

AM: w a double l a h

M: ahh so you add the h//

AM: so every ( )//

M: still //

AM: ( ) letters

M: but still you got each other?

AM: yeah yeah of course (.) same talks (.) it is obvious t you understand free way (.) the way of writing

M: but if you write the double l only (.) it might be as Yj [This Arabic expression means ‘or’ in English]

AM: no no no (.) NO you would get the meaning from the conversation (.) you know the person

M: ahh so there is no confusion//

AM: and then Yj [This Arabic expression means ‘or’ in English] we write it as w l (.) there is no a

M: hm

AM: or w l l a (.) yeah it is w l l (.) so there would be no space to use the a

M: and how about the numbers you used (.) YOU USED the six and a dot

AM: YEAH this is [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong 't'] and the dot for the sound [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a voiced 'th']

M: okay (.) and is it fixed for the ahh//

AM: yeah (.) yeah and there are PEOPLE put the dot after and others before

M: hm

AM: I am always after the number (.) yeah

M: hm

AM: some people t put it before

M: whats the difference?

AM: it is away (.) their way but ahh I always put it after the number

M: and both give the same sound//

AM: yeah f(.) you got the meaning (.) and this is also with other letters ahhh like the ع [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong 'a'] and ahh غ [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong 'gh']

M: how do you write the غ [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong 'gh']

AM: ahh the letter three ta ahhhh letter three ahh number three and a dot

M: okay and some people put the g h

AM: YEAH (.) this is I feel more English

M: hm

AM: it feels more like English (0.3) ahh I do not feel it is a changed Arabic (.) I feel it is pure English

M: hm

AM: for example (.) some people write [This Arabic word means the holy month 'Ramadan' in English] like when it came ahh I got a lot of broadcasts ware as pure English (.) but I do it like I showed you (.) with the [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong 'th'] ahh (.) I only write pure pure English and Arabic this way (.) ahh I do not feel ahh (0.2) yeah

M: so (.) you only mix the //

AM: yeah Arabic and pure English

M: hm (0.3) and here you used two question marks

AM: yeah f me me if I use these mark ta (.) ahh if I double them like ahh like (.) for example (.) ta I stress them (.) it is exciting (.) you understand

M: hm

AM: I was like excited abuot ahh something f OR so into the subject

M: hm

AM: I put DOUBLE question marks or any marks f or ahh double dots

M: and down here you put one exclamation mark

AM: yeah that is it (.) exclamation (.) that would be the end of the subject (0.2) or ahhh am so close that the subject will end (.) or ahh ( )//

M: hm (.) its like//

AM: as if I want a respond from you (.) basically I I ahh before a while I read something f in this science ahh AN ARTICLE (.) that they put A STUDY

M: hm

AM: that the percentage will be higher f that it is TWINTY PERCENT higher (.) if you put this exclamation mark (.) you will get a response for your message

M: ahh okay

AM: I think before I used to put it (.) BUT like after that I become whenever I want a respond (.) it worked (.) like ninety tnine percent of the time

M: ah

AM: even if like ( ) that person ( ) me ( ) are not talking (0.1) and I say it is impossible to get a (.) response $ (.) I put the exclamation mark and that worked (0.3) you understand

M: yeah

AM: so I put them unconsciously (.) one or two next to each other (0.1) MORE $would be like ahhhhh (.) like I did not $like the topic (.) like three or four or more

M: hm

AM: like wa tha hell

M: hm

AM: you understand

M: yeah (.) it is only with the exclamation mark or question//

AM: no exclamation (.) both actually (.) I I MOSTLY (.) MOSTLY I use exclamation and ahh the question marks like a question (0.1) for example I tell you $ see what that girl did (.) I will put several exclamation marks (0.2) you understand

M: as you did not like the topic//

AM: EXCATLY(.) like I did not like the subject

M: okay J, and the laughing face

AM: yeah I was laughing (.) cuz the movie was really funny (.) it is normal the person who you talking to ahm (.) in this conversation// you put faces

M: some people put the lol

AM: it is normal you can use both (.) but I (.) FOR ME I use faces more

M: okaaaay (0.3) hmm and your friend here ( )

AM: yeah the lol

M: yeah

AM: if it is only one o (.) its like I got ya (0.2) ahh if you put oz (.) like you really laughing

M: aha

AM: like here (.) shes like I got ya

M: so (.) you knew that she is not laughing

AM: YEAH (.) its one o and ahh for me (.) one o is like (.) ahh (0.2) like (.) no comment or so

M: okay

AM: different styles (.) you know (.) but ahhm (.) we understand each others (.) you know (0.1) the only problem is when someone $ (.) does not understand this (.) and speak this Arabish

M: hm

AM: REALLY (.) ets annoying (.) seriously ((laughs))

M: really ((laughs))

AM: yeah (.) I mean if you do not know hot mix (0.2) then don't speak this language

M: so (0.3) how do you know $ I mean if this person knows or//

AM: of course I know (.) ahhhm (.) its obvious (.) you can tell from the context (.) yeah (0.2) that's ma opinion

M: hmm (0.3) I see

AM: yeah (.) ahm (0.1) war else war else (0.2) hmmm (.) yeah that's all

M: oaky (0.4) do you want to add something (.) or ahh (0.2) do you want to//

AM: no ((laughs)) thank you

M: thank you

Appendix 12: Transcribed Interview 2 – Ahmed

Date: 8th of December 2013

Duration: 39 minutes and 27 seconds

Social Group: Established Elite

M: okay let us start first talking about when did you use this //

AH: use what //

M: using Arabish

AH: I think it was in 2001 when I first started using it

M: hm

AH: it started ahm (.) with the text mms

M: yeah true

AH: yeah

M: okay (.) and do you remember why did you start using it $?

AH: .hhh (.) well (.) why $ (.) because I felt it was easier (0.2) for me and more close ahhm (0.1) to my hand I mean (.) I mean I prefer to write this way (.) it is better than Arabic and English (0.3) amm yeah

M: yeah

AH: because you do not need $spelling (.) you do not need ( )

M: you mean the laaa (.) English spelling //

AH: yeah yeah ( ) you do not need to write a long word I mean

M: what do you mean (.) by a long word?

AH: I mean ahhhhm (0.2) most of the time (.) it is four words five words three words (.) I mean you do not need to write a whole sentence

M: hmm

AH: it is like an abbreviation

M: even in Arabic $ you can abbreviate words right?

AH: no there is not this is more close to me I feel

M: can you elaborate more about the (0.1) abbreviation?

AH: .Hhhh I do not know exactly how ahmm (.) maybe//

M: can you give me an example?

AH: well (0.2) it is hard to explain (.) but the letters you use are less when writing Arabish and ahh (.) even people can get what I mean with few words only $

M: okay $ do you remember or ahh (.) a sentence for example//

AH: THERE ARE a lot of words (.) I mean//

M: for example (.) in this example you gave me//

AH: yes $ do you see sup

M: YEAH

AH: it is an abbreviation//

MH: for what?

AH: instead of saying $ whatsap (.) no need

M: I see but//

AH: yeah (.) no need to explain//

M: okay ahh (.) sup is an English abbreviation right//

AH: yeah (.) but you can use it in Arabish in abbreviation//

M: do you do this too (.) I mean when you write English//

AH: all the time

M: OKAY (.) and how often do you use the ahh Arabish?

AH: a lot (.) always

M: do you always always communicate ahm (.) Arabish with everyone?

AH: yeah

M: okay (0.2) and with whom do you communicate?

AH: no sometime when someone speaks to you in Arabic you have to respond in Arabic too ( )

M: okay (.) and why is that?

AH: .hhh ahhh (0.2) because they do not understand the [this expression is used to refer to the process of converting people or objects from being non-Arabic to become Arabic. This also includes speech or actions, which have been changed or customized to represent something Arabic or to be considered within the Arabic context]

M: hmm

AH: there are some people $ who are still communicating Arabic in these days

M: you mean //

AH: they cannot interpret the codes ( )

M: so you only use it $ with people who do not know Arabish//

AH: to be honest $ ahm (0.1) with people who are less intelligent (.)

M: okaaay (.) how (.) I mean what do you mean (.0.1) you know them//

AH: not really (.) some people I know or (.) I mean ahh (.) I have to work with (0.2) and especially old people

M: hmm

AH: IT IS HARD for them (.) to get Arabish

M: I see

AH: even if you teach them$ (.) they will not learn it at all ah never

M: hm okay (.) and CAN YOU evaluate the other user (.) you know if ahhm (.) he is intelligent or not//

AH: do you mean judge them //

M: I MEAN you said you do not use Arabish with ahh (.) less intelligent as you said //

AH: yeah $ right (.) you can tell who the person is by his writings (0.3) yeah you judge ( ) you judge people (.) how do THEY TALK and how do they know .hhh Hhh (.) mm (0.2) how they know this language (.) it is not easy $ that everyone can know this Arabish (.) I believe that it is very difficult $ for a lot of people to learn it (.) there are people $ that their minds cannot accept things .hhhh (.) mmm it for example (.) how to change^ the [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong 't'] and how to change that

M: hmm (.) okay

AH: no he is used to ahh yeah (.) his own language (.) I mean the same and if he writes in English $he writes (.) you instead of writing (.) y o u (.) he writes u o (.) OR he deleted some letters

M: hmm

AH: so everyone $ has his own way

M: SO how about your own //

AH: it is the right way (.) but ahh (.) as I told you not everyone can speak this language ahhm yeah M: and //

AH: with them $ (.) .hhh ahhh (0.1) I tried to send Arabish (.) but they do not reply and they do not get it (0.3) I think maybe because of their English or their age (0.1) but (.) where is the problem (.) .hh ahh (.) I can speak Arabic

M: aha

AH: Even those who are using it (.) they don't know (.) how to use it

M: aha (.) but why//

AH: it is not a LANGUAGE (.) people have created this (.) this thing is not a language $ (.) people created this (.) if you speak to someone in English (.) and he did not reply//

M: yes//

AH: then he did not understand it (.) and if you write in Arabish and he replied with a question mark (.) then he doesn't know it

M: hmm

AH: so this (.) has been created by people $ (0.3) ahh now it is more spread everyone can understand it and everyone can speak it (.) it is something different

M: okay and what do you think of the other Arabish users (.) I mean their ways? Are they similar to yours?

AH: no online is different (.) if you chat with someone (.) ahm ( ) you will know what is his mentality or something

M: okay (.) ahh can you elaborate more?

AH: you understand (0.2) I mean you can tell from the lines (0.1) ah it depends on the subject you discuss

M: yeah $ but what about his way of employing the Arabish? I mean does it DEPEND on the subject?

AH: you can identify people based on their way ahh (0.4) even if they write Arabish (.) you can know//

M: so//

105 AH: if this person is classy or not (.) well raised $ educated and sophisticated (.) or not $ (0.2) you can
106 know all this
107 M: hm (.) I see (.) so is there any specific way that helps you (0.2) to identify them?
108 AH: no (0.2) honestly (.) it is similar to speaking $ to someone and ahhm (0.1) you can know from the
109 words he uses or even his tone (.) how he pronounces the words (0.1) ahhm (.) it is the same for me
110 M: aha
111 AH: BUT (.) this is the language of this new world for me $ (.) I believe that all the new generations
112 will only use Arabish
113 M: hm
114 AH: they started ( )
115 M: but how about the Arabic or English?
116 AH: no $ they even take some words (0.4) and then they write the words $(0.2) and get used to them (.)
117 ahhm (0.1) and if they want to express $ for example (.) he does not say 4?^ as _£ 1
118 [means 'I love you' in English] no $ it is a seven b k
119 M: hmm
120 AH: it is more convenient (.) people think differently $ now
121 M: what do you mean?
122 AH: hhhh (0.2) I MEAN (.) people think differently (.) they want something new (.) they are bored from
123 the old ahh (.) they are bored from the ORIGIANL language .hhh they want to create something it is
124 normal (0.1) for example when some words are mixed together
125 M: hmm
126 AH: some people invent new words (.) you DO NOT KNOW THEM (.) and you do not
127 understand them $ (0.2) they have no relation to English or even Arabic ( ) weird words
128 English with Arabic (.) mixed
129 M: like what (.0.3) can you think of an example?
130 AH: ahm (0.4) not really now (.) but you know new words
131 M: are there any of these words (0.4) for example (.) in this example you sent me?
132 AH: no but it happens (.) of course not (.) sup you know (.) we said $ it is an abbreviation (0.6) but I do
133 not think of it as English (0.2) only ahh (.) also Arabish (.) Arabish helps to abbreviate words
134 M: and how about the numbers $ here? Do you always use them? (0.3) and for which sound?
135 AH: ((laughs)) you know $ what does it mean
136 M: ((laughs)) of course $ I know (.) but I mean is it consistent I mean your use of this number//
137 AH: yeah ahh you know there are no other numbers (.) which can be used (.) for £ [This Arabic sound has
138 no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong 't'] (.) no one
139 uses h (.) it is stupid $
140 M: is this YOU (.) who used the seven ( )
141 AH: No no (.) my friend
142 M: okay (.) .hhhh (0.2) why do you specifically choose this example//

AH: you mean//

M: I mean to send it//

AH: ah no reason (.) normal^

M: okay (.) okay do you think users who do not know the meaning of these numbers (.) can write Arabish?

AH: no (0.3) these are basics (.) but maybe people who do not know English can speak it too (.) but of course with a lot of mistakes (.) I told you now it is different $

M: what do you mean?

AH: I mean now it is different (.) before it was only people who know English even now but ahhm (0.2) people learned it even if they cannot speak English (.) yeah ahm Hhhh (0.2) still I can tell the difference between them ahh (0.1) I mean the background (.) of any person you chat with him on ahh (0.2) for example ahm (.) as chatting I mean (.) you can understand $ what his mentality is from the way he speaks $ (0.3) what kind of questions he asks or goals (0.2) ahm this is $ this is another thing

M: hmm

AH: it is not easy to WRITE Arabish (0.2) especially if you do not know English (.) I mean to write the write way

M: hm

AH: because you have write the words (.) <u>specific rhythm</u> $(0.2) <u>specific way</u> (.) and the sounds (.) so I feel ahh (.) it is better to know the English first

M: yeah $ but maybe by the time a user can learn these rhythms//

AH: YEAH but it is not easy $ not easy (.) he cannot learn it really fast and not as in the same ways ahh .hhhh as someone who knows English ahh (0.2) he needs time (.) now many are using this just to show that they can speak English ((laughs))

M: ((laughs))

AH: YEAH (0.3) this is what I see

M: and do you see yourself $ as more competent with Arabish//

AH: very $ very

M: in which ways //

AH: I do not know how $ but I know it (.) very well from A to Z (.) ahhm (0.3) I have been using it for a long time now .hhh (.) ahh and my English is good (0.1) it is different when I use it with my friends (.) we are different .hh (0.1) than those who just started $ ( ) I knew it I see myself very competent (.) maybe I am right $ or wrong $( )

M: SO ahhm (0.2) do you think you can understand the other ways of employing Arabish//

AH: you mean with different spellings $

M: yeah or//

AH: yeah yeah I can see the meaning (.) it is not consistent

M: aha

AH: you know j [This sound equals the sound ‘th’ in English] some use t h or <u>four</u>//

M: and which one do you use?

AH: always t h

M: why?

AH: I always like the original (.) it is better than four ((laughs))

M: ((laughs)) in which ways?

AH: t h is more English (.) I use English a lot maybe that is why (0.4) some people $ maybe (0.1) they do not know $what the t h for

M: you mean in Arabish$

AH: yes but I use the nine seven eight and others and everyone knows (0.2) ahh what they stand for right?

M: yeah $ I guess (0.2) you mean each presents only one particular sound?

AH: of course (.) the nine for [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong 's'] and five for £ [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is 'kh'] you know

M: okay

AH: but I do not know (.) I expect people (.) will invent new things in Arabish

M: like what $

AH: .hhhh (0.2) ahh I do not know exactly (0.1) but this will never stop (.) ahhm (0.3) for example (.) when I first used it (.) it was EXCLUSIVE to some people (0.1) I mean if their English is bad (.) they cannot $ use it right

M: aha

AH: but now for me and my friends (.) we use English with Arabish (0.2) and even our English is different

M: in which ways is different //

AH: we abbreviate our words (0.2) like natives (.) such as the sup not everyone does the same

M: aha

AH: people chat a lot so yeah (0.5) they invent ahh each group (0.1) invent something (.) it is like coding

M: hmm

AH: maybe they will invent something even new (.) for example French letters

M: ((laughs)) so it is not related only to English letters

AH: it is related $ I mean with French $ it can be MIXED with English and Arabish you know to be different

M: but not everyone knows French //

AH: we know $ (0.2) it is easy (.) why not $ ahh of course $ not everyone can speak French

M: okay (.) do you mean that//

AH: I mean my friends can speak English and some French ahhm for example (.) I mean others who speak Arabish but not English (0.2) who think they are COOL

M: it is not cool to use Arabish //

AH: .hhh ANYTHING has been recently created is related to the cool (0.4) ahh I mean some cannot speak Arabish or ahh not competent .hhhh (0.3) but still think they are cool when they speak it $ it is obvious (.) you can identify these people

M: really (.) how?

AH: ((laughs)) now you are making it really difficult to answer

M: ((laughs)) sorry (.) why?

AH: it is difficult to explain but it is a feeling (.) you have (.) you feel it too right?

M: maybe yes sometimes

AH: maybe they are trying so hard (.) ahhh to be perfect I do not know it is clear

M: I see so you are cool

AH: ((laughs)) of course (.) I mix I mix English with Arabish

M: always $ I mean when do you mix?

AH: some words ( ) you cannot write them in Arabic just English

M: like what?

AH: for example (.) I write here h e r e in Arabish (.) no Arabic word for it

M: yes there is [This Arabic word has a direct translation in English which is the word ‘here']

AH: YEAH but I do not use it (0.2) ahh I am I am I mean for me maybe (0.1) I am different than others (.) I choose some words $ but ahh (.) I mean I am not one hundred percent Arabish

M: hmm

AH: you have <u>to mix</u> I do not know to use (.) ammm (.) there are a lot of people who do not understand a lot $

M: hm

AH: Arabish Arabish ( )

M: do you mean they cannot understand $ Arabish?

AH: they know both (.) but $ they speak English we use it

M: ahh//

AH: or some just know English or Arabic$ there is no between

M: SO you use English or Arabic?

AH: no (.) English of course

M: I see

AH: yeah

M: so in this example (.) you mix?

AH: yeah (.) sup and Arabish

M: and your friend (0.1) does he//

AH: yes he mix too (0.2) but not here

M: okay (0.2) do you want to add something? talk more about (0.1) example?

AH: no thank you ((laughs))

M: ((laughs)) thank you

Appendix 13: Transcribed Interview 3 – Reem

Date: 23rd of August 2014

Duration: 33 minutes and 16 seconds

Social Group: Established Elite

M: hello

R: hello

M: aaaammm (.) can you tell me (.) when was the first time you used Arabish?

R: ahhhhm (0.2) from the beginning hmm (.) from the beginning when I had an email and started chatting I mean

M: do you mean T you made your email using this //

R: I did not use this in my email (.) when I first had an email and start chatting T I started to talk this

M: aha (0.1) so do you remember when was that?

R: maybe ahhh (0.3) before ten years T or more

M: ten years (.) and why did you use it (.) do you remember//

R: did what?

M: I mean what was the reason behind your use of Arabish at that time?

R: what exactly? the email or ((laughs))

M: ((laughs)) I mean your use of Arabish //

R: I TOLD YOU because ahhh//

M: yeah because

R: ((laughs))

M: ((laughs))

R: because this is (.) this is the way I found everyone is using to talk (0.2) I found myself in a society where everyone is speaking this way or ahhh (.) THE COMMUNITY that I have been living in or still living in till now J they are speaking this way (.) this is the trend (.) I mean

M: do you mean it is used by your friends (0.1) and social groups?

R: my friends and everyone around me

M: so do you use it all the time or //

R: not always there is there ahhh (.) there are times I use it and others I use (.) ahhh English

M: and how about Arabic do you use it?

R: no

M: never?

R: never

M: okay and when do you use Arabish and when do you use English?

R: hmmm (0.3) I do not know (.) there is (.) when the conversation is formal (.) it will be in English and ahhh if the conversation someone I know I mean informal $ a normal chatting I use ( )

M: okay (0.1) so do you mean informal as with your friends//

R: not necessarily (0.1) it can ( ) similar age or older J

M: yeah so it depends//

R: exactly

M: okay (0.2) can you tell me more J about your use of Arabish with friends (.) I mean why do not you use ahhh (.) for example//

R: the whole idea is that hooo (0.3) Arabic is difficult to be written

M: aha

R: or maybe (.) I am not used to it (.) BUT at the same time speaking Arabic is easier than English

M: English

R: I mean (.) there are a lot of talks that you cannot produce it in English J

M: aha

R: it is not there (.) at that time J

M: hm

R: THAT IS IT//

M: DO YOU MEAN English English

R: yes English English

M: okay

R: and at the same time (.) writing Arabic is difficult (0.2) ARABIC LETTERS (.) even if ( ) it will be difficult

M: hm

R: that is it (.) the English $ the ahh (.) same ENGLISH LETTERS (.) I mean you write same letters in Arabic

M: hm

R: so it becomes very easy

M: hm yeah ( )//

R: ( ) BETTER //

M: yeah yeah //

R: than writing this or this

M: I got it okay (.) so you found it difficult to write in Arabic?

R: I do not like it (0.2) I know Arabic (.) ahh (.) but am not used to it

M: okay (0.4) and how about your friends ahhh I mean do they also I mean (.) do not like Arabic

R: yes (.) we are all the same (01) everyone talks the way he likes (.) amm (.) some people ahh sometimes I talk to them like this and they respond in Arabic (.) or respond sometimes English (0.5)

M: hm

R: I mean (.) you cannot force anyone

M: SO your friends you mean (.) responding Arabic or//

R: I did not mean $ my friends (0.1) my friends (.) we are all the same $ we only use Arabish or ahh ( ) English but //

M: so who respond in//

R: some people even if you talk to them in Arabish or English ahh (.) they respond in Arabic

M: okay (0.1) so you mean they are not your friends?

R: no no ( ) some people I know only (0.1) but we are not close

M: .hhh okaaaay (.) and do you know WHY they do that

R: honestly no (0.2) but I do not judge them (0.2) because ahh (.) it depends on the nature your relationship (.) there is ((laughs))

M: ((laughs)) yeah I am listening

R: ((laughs)) there is no (.) I cannot force him to talk like me $

M: aha

R: EVERYONE talks the way HE WANTS and his community $

M: okay

R: what matters to me (.) are my friends $ (.) and how we talk like each other (.) because SOME PEOPLE they feel comfortable to talk in Arabic $ and others not

M: hm

R: but it can deliver than Arabic $ because Arabic (.) if you use it to speak this (.) you cannot deliver your message $

M: what language//

R: our talks (.) I mean everyday talks

M: hm

R: YOU CAN WRITE IT (.) but ahh YOU CANNOT (.) ahhh I do not know $ when you read it $ (.) or the person who read your talk in Arabic $ (.) for me WHEN I READ in Arabic

M: hm

R: slang in Arabic (.) it takes me long time to understand the word

M: understand ( )//

R: ( ) difficult

M: is it spelling or //

R: No ( ) I cannot explain it (.) but it takes time to write it (.) BUT ahh (.) when you read it in ENGLISH LETTERS (.) much easier

M: okay ahhm (0.5) and do people who use English as you said ahh (.) you said some $ I mean aaaaaam (0.2) speak Arabic too?

R: you mean fluent in English //

M: not//

R: ( ) you have to know English of course (0.5) I mean if someone has been using Arabic $ (0.2) Arabic more than English $ (0.3) he will feel more comfortable in wiring in Arabic and ahhh ( ) to write English you need to be fluent

M: you mean fluent in English ?

R: yes (0.1) to write Arabish

M: aha (0.2) SO (.) to write Arabish (.) you need to be fluent in English?

R: YES (.) you have to know English (0.2) the person who is using English English $ most of his life (.) I mean pure English (.) not the ahhhh (0.4) ( ) will be the same situation (0.2) it is better for him to write either ENGLISH or Franco Arabic

M: what is the Franco Arabic?

R: the Arabish

M: why do you call//

R: it is just another name $ to this language (0.2) but we said Arabish

M: aha (0.3) where did you hear this name

R: maybe it is (0.3) ahhh means the use of English letters to speak Arabic (0.2) but it is Arabish

M: hmm

R: it depends on your background

M: what do you mean?

R: your background

M: you mean the use of the name $ Arabish or//

R: I mean in general (0.2) even when you use it ahhhm (.) I am I DO NOT JUDGE (.) but you find someone talks <u>English</u> (.) <u>English</u> (.) <u>everything is English</u> (.) you know $ (.) he is educated or ah sophisticated or

M: hm

R: ANYTHING (.) and if he speaks Arabic (0.1) you will also know $ his//

M: you mean the educational//

R: not only the educational $ (.) you will know both (.) the educational is related to this (.) because if you (.) if if if (.) and if ahh since you were a child $ you live in an Arabic environment (,) when you appear in social (.) when you use the social network (0.2) you will use Arabic

M: hm

R: you understand

M: hm

R: you will use the Arabic (0.2) you will not use $ other things (.) that you did not study or you did not know ( ) understand a thing (0.3) THAT IS IT (.) so the way of writing (.) it can can (.) give you a thing about the background of a ( )

M: hm (.) even if you do see the person

R: even though

M: okay (0.3) so .hhh (.) does that for example ahh does that mean all the people who are using this (.) are coming from the same background

R: (0.4) no of course (.) there are people but (0.1) not necessarily (.) some people use it to understand only not necessarily//

M: what do you mean understand//

R: I do not know (.) hmm (0.2) I do not know how to explain//

M: try

R: (0.6) lets say Mashael speaks English (.) or say she cares about the appearance more $ so when she sees someone speaks English (.) she will say (.) yeah this person is this (0.1) or he studied this $ (.) THIS IS GOOD or this is ahh (0.) I mean socially (.) is good or not or class or or ahh (0.2) you understand

M: hm

R: there are people using it (0.2) not all people using this but there are people (0.2) using this to judge the ones in front of you

M: hm

R: even if you do not know them

M: hm

R: you can evaluate people (0.1) from their way of writing (.) and it differs depending on the way of writing Arabish or English or Arabish and English (.) the way of writing itself

M: hm

R: <u>say</u> (.) you use English $ to write Arabic talk

M: hm

R: the way it is used (0.1) for example the six and ( )

M: yeah

R: I mean FOR EXAMPLE the <u>six</u> (.) or £ [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘kh'] (.) not everyone is using the five (.) some are using the k h

M: hm

R: yeah

M: SO (.) everyone is different//

R: everyone is different (.) even the LETTERS themselves (0.1) the way of writing is different//

M: AND ahh based on what ahh BASIS//

R: basis//

M: yeah difference//

R: meaning what//
M: why is it different $ (.) is it personal or//
R: everyone ahh no (.) is not his following his head (0.1) BUT for example (.) the people around him is using what (.) so he is using the same (.) you understand
M: hm
R: each environment is different than another environment
M: YEAH he is influenced by the people around//
R: exactly (.) he is influenced by the environment he was raised in $ for example they write the k h as say five (.) they will do the same
M: hm and how about you five for//
R: I use the five
M: okay (.) lets see your example here
R: yeah
M: so you used the five (0.1) first $ why did you specifically choose this example?
R: you mean the letters?
M: I mean the example $ in general
R: aha okay (0.1) no specific reason (.) example of my Arabish
M: so you used the seven for//
R: Hhhh (.) for £ [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘h']
M: okay $ and the five for the//
R: C [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘kh']
M: okay and you friend here (0.2) ammm am good what are you doing (.) am bored let us go out
R: hm
M: she used English and Arabish here
R: ( ) (0.7) some people mix between the two (.) so instead of writing I am bored $ in Arabic (0.2) it is longer
M: hm
R: am bored $ is easier (0.5) you understand
M: yeah
R: you find some people write Arabish and then switch $ to English (0.1) you find an English word in the middle $
M: THE WORD does not have a meaning in Arabic//
R: it is easier in English (0.2) for example if you write BREAK (.) you will take a break (0.2) instead of writing it as b r a I k (.) for example
M: hm
R: you write it break $ because it is easier (.) you are used o this in English
M: okay
R: and then you switch to Arabish again
M: hm

R: it is the same here (.) when you write it in English //
M: okay
R: it is easier $ instead of translating the word
M: and number three here//
R: ahh ahm (.) ahh three this for ٤ [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘a']
M: and is it fixed? I MEAN for this sound (.) because as you said some people write the ٤ [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘kh']//
R: YES yes (.) am used to this since ah since from I I started using these letters (.) I do not change//
M: yes//
R: and I am using the English too (0.1) but Arabish depends you know
M: what do you mean?
R: the spelling $ is different than English
M: can you explain ahhm or for example (.) like what?
R: Hhhh mmm (0.2) in all situations you write the Arabic words in English $
M: hm
R: IT IS ah (0.3) a complex word (.) it does not have a certain spelling (0.1) you can WRITE (.) the y and I (.) same meaning
M: mm
R: ( ) you can write the ahhh (0.3) the//
M: which sounds the y and I give?
R: FOR EXAMPLE the [This Arabic sound equals the English sound ‘e’]
M: mm
R: some people can put double e
M: hm
R: and ahhhh (0.3) what else (0.2) as I TOLD YOU (.) for the spelling (.) each person depends on what he is used to (.) and there are many others
M: do you understand it//
R: you understand it $ from the context (.) when you read (0.2) and THE LETTERS themselves (.) even if you you ah found the word is difficult to be read ahh (0.2) no $ you will find yourself going on with the sentence (.) even if the letters are different ( ) you got the word
M: and what do you use for this sound (0.2) the allll e or y
R: I use the y (0.2) it is fixed
M: okay (0.5) in your example ahh (0.3) you used the y here with enty [means ‘you' in English] ahh (0.2) gloely [means ‘tell me' in English] okay (0.2) but how about shofi [means ‘see' in English] here (0.2) you used the I not the y
R: let me see ( ) hm (.) No because shofi [means ‘see' in English] yey $ not e
M: okay (.) so $ with the sound yey (0.2) you used the ahhm (.) i
R: yes $ most of the times
M: and your friend here (0.1) is the same using//

R: yes yes $ we use the same letters
M: why you are the similar//
R: ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) NO I mean
R: I think (.) we are used to the same environment (0.3) so it is natural to write the same way
M: okay $ (.) is she a close friend of yours?
R: very much (0.3) we went to schools together
M: okaaaayh (0.5) so what do you think of Arabish?
R: this language?
M: yes
R: hmmm (0.3) I think it is good and bad (0.3) I mean it is good only if IT IS USED by
people who know ENGLISH ENGLISH $ it will not affect their language (0.2) because you
mix two languages (0.2) for them it is a trend $ (.) everyone is using it now (0.2) and this how they
understand each other (.) so if they do not know English English (0.3) they will be confused (.) they are
not used $ to this in their community (.) so for sure it will affect their Arabic $
M: do you feel this affect your language?
R: no $ (0.3) not at all (.) I know English English (0.1) I am used to this normal (0.2) but I am talking
about people who do not know ENGLISH (0.6) they should only use Arabic
M: okay (0.3) ahhhh ( ) okay (0.5) do you want to add something
R: hmmm (0.3) no thanks
M: perfect $ (.) thank you

Appendix 14: Transcribed Interview 4 – Nouf

Date: 22nd of December 2013

Duration: 34 minutes and 03 seconds

Social Group: Elite

NU: hi ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) okay so when did you first use Arabish?
NU: ( ) in 2001
M: and why did you start using it?
NU: I used it ahhh when we first used ( ) there was not an$ Arabic keyboard
M: hm
NU: the keyboard
M: ah SO you used it because of the keyboard //
NU: yeah there was no Arabic $ and there was no (0.2) it was a fashion (.) people are using it cool ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) cool (.) okay and with WHOM you were chatting with?
NU: friends
M: okay (.) and were there any reasons you believe that have motivated you (.) to use it at that time
NU: I felt it can help to learn English more (.) because you have to write English sometimes
M: how? I mean how can it help to learn English?
NU: yeah you know how to write
M: do you mean it helped //
NU: yes $ it helped me to learn English (.) I am more familiar with the letters and how they are placed (.) I write very quickly (.) without looking at the keyboard
M: I see //
NU: I mean I am no longer confused between Arabic and English ahh I do not need to switch to Arabic or English
M: aha
NU: no$ I know the places
M: do you think that has influenced your use of English //
NU: yeah yeah $ my English is better even my spellings ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) okay (.) did you have problems (.) I mean with spellings?
NU: no honestly (.) my English is good
M: okay (0.1) what do you mean it helped?

NU: .hhhh ahhh I do not know but (.) for sure it helped me
M: can you elaborate (.) for example in which ways?
NU: hmm (.) it is hard to explain ahh I mean I cannot explain how but mm but I know it helped me
M: yeah
NU: yeah true it helped in how to spell the words correctly .hh ahh but maybe for others the situation is different
M: what do you mean?
NU: I mean (.) before people were very cool but NOW it is normal (0.2) I mean I prefer that they speak Arabic
M: can you explain more? I mean what causes the difference //
NU: .hhhh I do not know ahhm maybe maybe I am worried (.) I mean honestly honestly people are no longer competent with Arabic (.) I mean the MISSPELLING suddenly all of them (.) they write this language
M: hm
NU: so yeah they have to go back to ( )
M: so now you are using Arabic?
NU: NO I am not talking about myself (.) I use Arabish I do not have problems with my Arabic $ from the beginning
M: so who should use Arabic?
NU: ahh those people who do not know (.) I mean they have problems$ in their Arabic
M: do they also have problems in their Arabish?
NU: yeah $ misspelling (.) it is better they speak only Arabic (0.3) I rarely use Arabic but I am competent //
M: even if someone speaks to you in Arabic?
NU: they speak to me in Arabic and I respond in Arabish^
M: so with the misspelling you said $ ahhm I mean it helped you to improve your English I mean in which ways (.) how? do you mean that there is a sort of things OR rules in relation to Arabish
NU: YEAH (.) but there is (.) sometimes you have to write a word $ in English
M: aha
NU: so yes that is it $ it helped me ahhm with this (.) I am used to write English
M: so does that mean that you mix //
NU: mix yes yes and it is wrong
M: why?
NU: either people speak only Arabish or only English
M: so you believe that it is better if you only use //
NU: NO I am not talking about myself (.) I mean others because it makes me nervous $to see people writing half and half
M: why $in which ways?
NU: well before it was fine (.) I mean now everyone is trying so hard ahhm (0.1) it is very annoying
M: okay

NU: and the misspelling in both just made the situation worse (.) either you speak to me $ Arabish Arabic or English DO NOT mix

M: and how will you respond?

NU: ((laughs)) I can mix (.) no honestly I can because I am competent in English and Arabish M: okay and how about your friends (.) do they mix too?

NU: they have the same opinion as I do (.) .hhh ahhhhm we prefer $if they speak English English or Arabic Arabic

M: whose they?

NU: I mean those people (.) other THAN US

M: aha

NU: they cannot mix ( )

M: so do you think you and your friends can mix?

NU: of course $ before no one knows this language ahhhm so it was okay when people use it ahh (0.3) but hhm now everyone is trying to be cool but in a wrong way $

M: so how can you evaluate the other users (.) I mean if he knows or cool?

NU: I do not know (0.2) it is a feeling ahhm it depends on the style nothing specific I do not know some people (.) just the way they say the word is different

M: aha

NU: some use number four or t h for £[This Arabic letter represents the voiceless sound 'th' in English] ahhm yeah but it is different $

M: and what do you use?

NU: both nothing specific (.) ahh IT DEPENDS

M: depends on what (.) can you explain more

NU: ahhm (.) it depends on my mood ((laughs))

M: ((laughs))

NU: honestly there is no reason (.) but most of the time $ ahh I wrote it as t h not four

M: so you can evaluate the other user although there is no consistent //

NU: yes yes misspelling (0.3) they are deadly $

M: but he writes in Arabish

NU: he writes Arabish but the letters are wrong (0.3) ahh//

M: can you give me an example?

NU: .hhhh hmmm we (0.2) no (.) I do not have a specific example now but ahh //

M: so is your evaluation based on specific rules $ for example?

NU: no by the time we are used to certain things $ (.) but for example (0.4) they are writing things in a wrong way (.) I mean for example $ [This Arabic word means where are you in English] how do you write it?

M: you mean the ahh w //

NU: w (.) some people write it as O yeah $ so o a I n k instead of w a I

M: I see yeah

NU: this is a problem (0.2) they CHANGED what we are used to (.) it is wrong ahhm I do not know what they think ((laughs))

M: and how about the a I is it fixed I mean //

NU: A I N of course (.) please SOME PEOPEL write it as e ahh it is weird

M: aha

NU: it depends $some people they are used to a specific pattern $ to be honest.hhh ahh (.) it does not make sense (0.4) to me at all $

M: so why do you think they are doing that? (.) I mean since you think (.) ahh you are saying it is not the right way //

NU: ahh at the BEGINNING ahhm (.) people who used it (.) were PEOPLE from ahh high classes (.) they speak English and educated (.) ahh they travel so they speak this because it is cool

M: aha

NU: you know ahhh Hhhh yeah they know how to speak this

M: yeah

NU: yeah that is all

M: so who are using it now? (.) still the same people?

NU: yeah still (.) a lot of people amm using it (.) that is it ahh it becomes a language even people who do not know English they can speak it $

M: okay

NU: they DO NOT KNOW English but still speak this language and ahh honestly I speak to them in Arabic because they do not know (.) but they still respond $ in this language

M: why $ (.) what is the reason?

NU: .hhh ahhm (0.3) I do not know ahh maybe maybe they are trying to prove something (.) or ahhm yeah it is weird (.) Arabic exists now and it is easy $for them (.) but yeah they choose not to speak Arabic and later but hm (.) they are not competent with Arabish as well $ very weird

M: yeah

NU: I remember once (.) there was a girl she is not my friend but I know her through a friend .hhh ahhm I did not like her that much ((laughs))

M: ((laughs)) why?

NU: ahh no true she does not know English (.) amm I mean she went to I think ahh ( ) I cannot remember the name but her school was one of those schools (.) you know ( ) yeah (0.2) she cannot speak English //

M: aha //

NU: and she speaks to me in Arabish

M: so does it annoy you that she speaks Arabish or that she //

NU: NO the mistakes ahkh so terrible WHY why do you speak Arabish speak Arabic and I speak to her in Arabic many times because I want her to speak Arabic (.) she insistents to speak Arabish

M: okay

NU: it is so annoying $ true I want to ask her WHAT do you feel exactly ((laughs)) no seriously the confidence she has and all the mistakes

M: I see

NU: yeah
M: hmm (.) do you remember her mistakes?
NU: Hhhh fffff (0.2) honestly no (.) that was a long time ago
M: okay (.) so do you think it matters //
NU: in//
M: that you learned English //
NU: of course (.) of course
M: so in this example (.) is this a friend that you were talking to?
NU: yup
M: okay ahh and can I ask you (.) why did you choose this example to present?
NU: WHYYY hmm I do not know no reason
M: okay so here it seems that there are a lot of laughing ((laughs))
NU: yeah let me see ((laughs)) she is crazy
M: is she the one who used this face?
NU: yeah were laughing ahhh (.) on something
M: do you usually use these funny faces?
NU: yeah everyone actually it is natural^
M: okay and you respond with lol
NU: yeah
M: so what does it mean the capital lol and ahh how many (.) three lols?
NU: you know lol is for laughing
M: yes
NU: if you are laughing and ahhm (.) it was funny what we were talking about (.) if I put (.) one o it means not so funny
M: okay and capital//
NU: too funny ((laughs))
M: I see and then here you said hehehe
NU: yeah laughing too but the ahm (.) hehehe funnier for me
M: SO you were laughing more or (.) ahhm//
NU: NO not necessarily but (.) yeah it is funny
M: and here you also use a face//
NU: yeah angel face ahm SHE WAS laughing at what I said and she said [it is a local Arabic expression and the nearest translation in a local English for example can be 'you made me laugh so bad'] I told her I know and I put the angel face innocent ((laughs))
M: I see but why do think you use these faces?
NU: what do you mean?
M: I mean do you feel ahm (.) that you for example $ for example you cannot say it by words
NU: ahm you mean for example when I laugh
M: yeah like this
NU: of course you cannot (.) so when you use these faces $ it is easier you know (.) even when you write words you have to use these faces .hhh ahhh I mean for example $ (.) maybe there is something

M: hm

NU: you cannot express using the words that is why you use faces you understand

M: okay I see okay hmm what else so her use of number six here//

NU: yeah '~~^\,'i'k°~~i' [it is a local Arabic expression and the nearest translation in English can for example be 'you make laugh so bad'] for the '-^' [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘t']

M: so the six is the only thing for '-^' [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘t']?

NU: of course yeah everyone knows that you cannot write ah FOR EXAMPLE seven or ahh anything

M: and how about here '1^' [means 'like that' in English] your friend she put ahm why the ahm (.) I mean 't' and 'h'//

NU: '^' [This Arabic letter represents the sound 'th' in English]//

M: yeah I know $ but you know some people use maybe ahm//

NU: you mean four?

M: yeah so do you use four or this?

NU: hmm not necessarily it depends (.) both it is normal it depends there is nothing specific

M: okay I see

NU: yeah it depends you know people are different $ it means it depends on what he likes ( ) but for me it is okay but amm (0.2) I use the t h most of the time

M: okay is there something more you want to say about this example?

NU: nop

M: okay ahm (.) do you want to add something or say something or//

NU: no thank you

M: okay (.) thank you $for your time

NU: it is nothing you are welcome

Appendix 15: Transcribed Interview 5 – Noura

Date: 13th of January 2014

Duration: 28 minutes and 49 seconds

Social Group: Elite

N: ask me in English please am fine with it //
M: aha okay //
N: ( ) it has been long time ( ) I need to practice my English
M: I think it is better in Arabic (.) because I am afraid//
N: its okay (.) do not worry (.) I know English
M: okay can you provide a personal account of when did you use Arabish first of all
N: ahh ahhm (0.3) fourteen years ago
M: how old are you //
N: ((laughs))
M: ((laughs))
N: I first used it in two thousand
M: two thousand
N: yeah
M: why (.) did you use it?
N: hm
M: why or what was the reason
N: waaaay ahhhm I don't know I saw people using it .hh ahh my friends online
M: how often did you use //
N: ( ) daily
M: do you mean now?
N: ahhm
M: or do you mean before? //
N: now I used it too ahhm (.) cuz now when I want to write in Arabic I write in Arabic and when I want to write in English I write in English letters
M: what do you mean?
N: I don't use the four or three
M: what do you use instead of them //
N: rarely (.) I write in Arabic (.) when I speak Arabic but I write the words in English instead of using the three
M: aha (.) can you explain more?

N: am trying to practice ahh (.) to write the Arabic and English English or Arabish

M: Can you give me an example (0.1) when you use English words instead of using the three or four in Arabish?

N: ahhm for example [means come in English and it is usually written as 't3aly' in Arabish] I mean (.) I would say come instead of using the three

M: I see but did you use the three before //

N: yeah I used to use it J ahh (.) I am using both English and Arabish (.) am used to write words in English too

M: and how do you communicate (.) I mean usually with your friends?

N: English and Arabish

M: you said you write in Arabic too right?

N: yeah

M: so do you communicate (.) with your friends in Arabic?

N: ah NO I mean Arabic with ahhm when I talk to someone who is older than me (.) or even in English when I speak to my father ahh I never use the six ( ) ahh or three

M: hm

N: when I talk to older people $ I feel silly

M: hm

N: ahhhh and I do regret $using the three and these things because I feel that $ my English language ahhm became very weak $ after that M: really

N: yeah (.) spelling

M: in which ways your English spelling its not //

N: because $ in every language you have to practice ( ) so when I use to write English in the English letters my English was better than I ahh I //

M: so do you think Arabish cannot help improving the English of some people (.) especially IN RELATION to the sounds used (.) which are existed (.) in both Arabic and English? (0.1) for example (.) with sounds like a i and others

N: yeah I believe so (.) but you are talking about people whom their English is not really good ahh for me it is different

M: what do you mean?

N: .hhh ahhm my English is very good and that is why T I can write Arabish easily (.) it is not the way around

M: okay (.) and how can you or in which ways you can evaluate your use or ahm position as an Arabish user?

N: .hhh ahhm (0.3) ahh I don't know T it didn't change anything on me (.) why would it change?

M: No I T mean why or what //

N: you mean ( ) language in English language ( )

M: why did you use it at first place //

N: I saw T everyone is using it

M: okay
N: ahh (.) and honestly it makes you express yourself more because its easy for you to Hhh (.) to to talk when it is (.) on your native language ( )
M: hmm
N: its much easier for you to ( )
M: hmm
N: so T amm (.) I used to express myself more when
M: hm
N: when I used the six and three yeah
M: and how about now? Because you SAID you you hm do not use ahh the numbers I mean//
N: yeah (.) still I can express myself of course I TOLD YOU it is easier for me hmm (.) yeah even when I use the numbers ahhm (.) I mean I do not have problemsT I can use them and I can express myself
M: I see (0.2) can you explain more? I mean in which ways T you think it allows you to express yourself more?
N: .hhh aaaaahmm it is the way it works (.) I mean I do not know exactly T but it is our way (.) ahh maybe because it is easier yeah (.) yeah it is you can write what you speak yeah
M: and how about your use of Arabic //
N: it was not in (.) at that time
M: hm what do you mean?
N: right?
M: yeah but //
N: it is strange it became (.) it became a trend to talk in Arabic now
M: you mean in this //
N: to write in Arabic now
M: aha that is interesting and //
N: a lot of people now are writing Arabic (.) because people have become more aware now (.) ahh I mean they started to forget the Arabic
M: ahh right //
N: and ( )
M: I have //
N: ( ) I mean the younger generations (.) like our younger sisters $ started to speak Arabic more
M: really $
N: yeah (.) I have noticed $ my younger sister (.) a lot a lot ( )
M: I see
N: the yaw yaw whats aap started to write in Arabic
M: hm //
N: it becomes a trend (.) it is in to write Arabic
M: is it only a trend or do you think that they want to preserve the Arabic language //

N: it becomes a TREND (.) let's talk Arabic (.) I want to understand them (0.2) I mean it is okay we read books (.) in Arabic but those the yu yu they did not read (.) ahhm in Arabic such as poems for Khalid ALFaisal (Khalid AlFaisal is a well-known figure in Saudi, he is a member of the royal family and a famous poet) we did not $ they did not (.) ahh they were less Hhh we are different (.) we have principles ((laughs))

M: ((laughs))

N: I mean there is hope ((laughs))

M: ((laughs)) what hope do you mean //

N: I mean us (.) our generation

M: and your sister from which generation?

N: she is sixteen and ahh yeah they are different

M: in which way?

N: I don't know but ahhm (0.2) they have different principles that I do not understand (0.1) amm I mean they are not even consistent in what they do in their lives $

M: can you give me an example? I mean like //

N: I do not know but for example they use Arabic and speak English (.) ahh and sometimes they use $ Arabish ( )

M: yeah J so people who are using the Arabish //

N: creative

M: right

N: they are very creative ((laughs))

M: ((laughs))

N: they made life easier ((laughs))

M: HOW (.) in which ways I mean?

N: I mean (.) they want to use the English keyboard

M: hm

N: they do not want to switch and because in the past $ THEY DID NOT there was not ( ) why did it actually started at the beginning? I think there was ( ) there was not an Arabic keyboard

M: hmm

N: you used to do it Arabic (.) THE PHONE when it first introduced it did not support Arabic

M: right

N: and the laptop $ you have to go and do ( ) //

M: right

N: that is why $ THEY INVENT ahh they yeah uA [This Arabic proverb equals the English proverb 'never say die']

M: ((laughs))

N: that is why they invented $ this language

M: Hm

N: so they write using the English letters but speaking the Arabic

M: so who invented it? //

N: I think they invented it ((laughs)) but our generation who invented this $ not the older one (.) not at all (.) ah never M: yeah

N: right (.) or should we say the older generation $ so that we would not be seen as old ((laughs))

M: ((laughs)) it is okay we are not old

N: ((laughs))

M: so (.) are you now using the Arabic language more than Arabish?

N: no Arabish (.) it is not me who is using the Arabic J

M: so which one do you prefer //

N: you mean English Arabic or //

M: I mean in general

N: yeah English English because I believe that is no matter what happened (.) Arabic is my first language (.) its easy for me and Hhh (0.1) ahh I am competent with Arabic inshallah [Insha'Allah is an Arabic Islamic origin expression, which means 'god-welling' or 'if god is welling']

M: hmm

N: but for me its better to write English English or Arabish to practice my English

M: I see

N: it is not a challenge for me to write Arabic because it is my first ( )

M: so do you think using Arabish is a challenge? //

N: I mean we all know Arabic (.) ahh nothing new but ahm English is different (0.2) not everyone knows it$

M: so who do you think is using Arabish? I mean mostly $ by whom?

N: you mean which category

M: yeah I mean //

N: yeah the kind of people //

M: maybe or //

N: no right (.) there is like stereotyping ahh kind of (.) maybe he does not speak English well

M: aha

N: or maybe some of them are afraid from the wrong spelling ahhm (.) yeah yeah it is possible

M: hm

N: that he is not competent or maybe I believe that are afraid $ of the wrong spelling and they are not competent with another language

M: yeah

N: so he uses this language OR pretends to be cool

M: aha

N: so he's writing this language

M: I see (.) .hhh (.) so who are these people that are trying to be cool

N: I do not know them (.) but at the beginning only few of us use it because they know English (.) ahm now everyone knows it I mean there has been $ an awareness

M: what do you mean //

N: everyone knows it now regardless of their English

M: hm

N: in the last five years there has been a major change$ on how you see this language

M: okaaay

N: I mean ahhm (.) you prefer to speak English English or Arabic Arabic (0.2) you look more organized//

M: ahh do you mean//

N: I mean maybe Arabish is a method to pave the way for the use of English

M: so $ (0.1) do you think Arabish is something that will demolish by time?

N: no I mean but NOW I fell that you supposed to not speak English Arabic unless with someone that you know very well

M: why?

N: if someone a bit formal $ or first message between you and a person

M: hm

N: it should be either Arabic or English (.) it depends on the person

M: yeah yeah

N: but (.) you do not write this language if someone I mean (.) not someone ah for example you met a daughter of ahhm your mother's friend $ first message you send it is NORMAL a girl like you but I prefer to send her a message on English

M: formal//

N: I do not think I will use this language unless I know the person and it is between people who know each other very well

M: right

N: how are you going to translate the word in English [this word is a common word used in everyday spoken communication in Saudi. It means people who know each other very well and therefore, there are no boundaries in their relationships such as in asking for favors and other] ((laughs))

M: ((laughs)) ahh I don't know they know each other ahh people who can be close friends or warver //

N: close ( ) //

M: yeah something like that J I will provide an explanation of the terms or expressions used in all the interviews ahhm (.) it will be as close as possible to your words (.) for example to show the difference as in formal and informal communication I guess (.) okay let us move to the example you sent it

N: okay

M: so $can you tell me more (.) about the context?

N: ahhh lemme see

M: for example what was the conversation about and with whom?

N: it was with my married sister and ahh (.) she INVITED ME but (.) I was late J ((laughs)) as usual

M: ((laughs)) I do the same

N: ((laughs)) yeah no because her friends arrived before me and she was very angry ((laughs))

M: I see and mm (.) why did you choose this specific conversation?

N: no reason ( )

M: okay so here (.) is this you I'll be there (.) in ten minutes or mins

N: yeah cuz she called $ and I did not answer so I text her that am in the car

M: okay so you text her in Englishshsh

N: yeah we do that most the time

M: and mins here (.) is for//

N: minutes you know abbreviation

M: is it common?

N: you mean FOR ME

M: yeah and in general

N: yeah yeah am sure everyone knows that

M: and your sister here you are late but she wrote (.) u and r only

N: yeah abbreviation instead of she says aahh yooo are she puts only the u and r to save time

M: so you usually use abbreviations?

N: yeah most of the time

M: but why//

N: I feel it is a must some times (.) instead of wasting time in writing

M: aha so you mean saving time

N: yeah fast $ fast

M: okay and then (.) you said I know and put this face

N: yeah because she says ur late so I told her $ I know

M: and why did you put this face? It is a monkey ((laughs))

N: ((laughs)) NO I am shy (.) embarrassed because I was really LATE

M: okay so this face $ means you are embarrassed

N: yeah it is known

M: cannot you say this in words

N: you mean//

M: I MEAN that you are embarrassed//

N: I can of course but ah (.) I think the face say it all (.) you know

M: okay (0.2) why did you switch here [this expression has been employed in Arabish in the example provided and it means 'I swear I am coming sorry'] you wrote it in Arabish instead of English?

N: .hhhh ahmmm (0.2) no reason it is normal (.) I feel it is normal you can write the two I mean you can write English and switch to Arabish or mix them together for example it is normal (.) I think I am used to it $ we all do this (.) right

M: yeah ahh so why did not you for example .hh (.) switch to Arabic for example?

N: I told you I do not use Arabic $ It is very rarely but Arabish and English (.) you mix it is normal cuz one keyboard and you know how to do it

M: okay and do you normally switch .hhh (0.2) I mean when you talk you mix

N: yeah I guess most of the time (0.2) I have never noticed that I just write

M: okay and here last thing you switched again to English open

N: yeah (.) I text her to open the door for me but of course I were so late
M okay so you did not use here (0.2) any numbers?
N: .hhhh Hhh (0.3) no why do I use (.) there are no letters here that I need to use numbers for them (.) I TOLD YOU I do not use numbers normally
M: okay but do you know people//
N: you mean use them//
M: yeah
N: yeah a lot but specific numbers only
M: how
N: the 4 as th ahh is there anything else which is distinguished
M: for example the 5//
N: yeah but some put the number seven with a dot
M: yeah
N: but know it is well known
M: which one do you mean //
N: The seven (.) and the dot was first used before the 5
M: aha and now?
N: I expect both my friends use both (.) maybe
M: okay and other numbers//
N: that is all (.) there are other numbers but I stopped using them long time ago
M: yeah okay
N: plus (.) I think using numbers is not so cool anymore
M: how come?
N: I don't know (.) .hhh ahhm I prefer to use English (.) more sophisticated and organized
M: can you elaborate more?
N: ((laughs)) it is hard to explain (.) I guess that is all what I have to say
M: okay do you want to add something?
N: more than that (.) I do not think so ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) okay thank you //
N: are we done ((laughs))
M: we can continue if you want
N: no no ((laughs)) thank you//
M: ((laughs)) ur welcome

Appendix 16: Transcribed Interview 6 – Saeed

Date: 1st of September 2014

Duration: 44 minutes and 57 seconds

Social Group: Elite

S: Hi
M: Hi okay (.) ahh when did you first start using Arabish?
S: ahm (0.3) hmmm almost nine or ten year ago or earlier I think
M: really
S: yes of course $long time ago
M: okay and and WHY did you use it at first time?
S: ahhm (.) FIRST THING it was messaging normal messages
M: yeah
S: before Facebook and CHATTING and before all that
M: hm
S: the messages were all on the phone and ahh ( ) so it was faster ahhm ( ) I mean in the topic if this is going to be an answer for another question//
M: no$ it is fine (.) tell me please (.) why did you think that it is faster?
S: FASTER ah faster because MOST people they are not used $ to the Arabic keyboard and they do not know how to write Arabic in a fast way
M: aha
S: yeah most of the young people (.) most of the young people they do not know how to write Arabic fast $
M: aha
S: .hhh (.) ahh (.) and at the same TIME not everyone is fluent in English or can understand English well
M: yeah
S: ahh (.) so you cannot create a whole conversation in English with them PLUS OF COURSE that the slang Arabic ahhm (.) ahh it is HARD to say a lot using the slang in the English
M: aha
S: but THERE ARE some expressions that you have to write them exactly as the way you say them in your dialect ahhm (.) for example the word ' ^?I' [this Arabic word means the English verb 'I want']
M: I see //
S: yes exactly //
M: so you //

S: yes just this way you write it in Arabish
M: so how did you learn to write this Arabish? I mean (.) ahm did someone teach you? or did you learn it by yourself (.) for example?
S: No ahhh the people that were using this before me (.) ahh the people before me I used to talk to them
M: aha
S: yeah before I started this $ they were texting or writing this
M: yeah
S: of course at the very beginning I DID NOT UNDERSTAND many words (.) I mean ahh why did he use number seven in the middle of the word or number three and five all of these
M: yeah
S: so when $ I did not get the meaning (.) I asked them what does that mean people and then THEY GAVE me the list
M: so whom those people? are they your friends or similar age//
S: yeah yeah (0.1) many of them similar to my age but they started earlier than me
M: aha
S: yeah that is it because they know this before me $ and of course they learn this from other so ahhm (.) the pattern you will find ahh the people who started this are older than us
M: why do you think they invented this way for talking?
S: .hhhhh yeah I mean in the past the main thing was because of the ahhhm keyboard it did not have Arabic (.) this is the origin of its use of course (.) I think it is a convincing reason yeah (.) no Arabic keyboard at that time
M: yeah
S: when I talked to MY FRIENDS I will not talk in English (.) yeah I will talk using my dialect
M: yeah
S: but how I am going to deliver my message $ using my dialect (.) ahh I mean even if there Arabic I WILL NOT SAY AJ LI' [This Arabic expression was uttered by the participant in the classic Arabic form, which means 'I want' in English]
M: yeah but still you can communicate the dialect with Arabic keyboard ahm (.) I MEAN you do not have to write classic Arabic $
S: yeah yeah Hhhh (0.2) you can but as I said most of my generation most of our writing we are very slow in Arabic of course (.) I know how to write but ahhhm (.) to write a WORD or talk about something with my friends it will take long time (.) for me to write $ and send and get a response
M: but why do think the reason is? I mean why do think it takes you longer time to write in Arabic? ( ) it is our language //
S: yes it is OUR LANGUAGE of course (.) and we supposed and all that BUT the mobiles and their origins are not in Arabic or were created in Arabic countries (.) yeah they did not support the Arabic
M: ahh
S: so there was no Arabic I remember in the past once you get a phone ahhm it was so hard $ to change the keyboard
M: aha

S: OR OR to setup an Arabic keyboard on the phone it is a big story I mean It was in the PAST like the nokia
M: yeah
S: The beginning of this was not in Arabic (0.2) ahhm from ah from foreigner countries or whatsoever so the keyboard was in English
M: how about now I mean the keyboard can support//
S: yes there are Arabic and English
M: yeah SO //
S: be aware of one point .hh ahh there (.) there there is a large number of younger generation that are speaking Arabic
M: aha
S: they are or concept this is my language ahh (.) ahhm (.) so I do not have psychological problem or I I do not have feel less that I need to speak English
M: I see
S: they speak Arabic and the dialect
M: so does that mean that they are ahhm (.) they see people who are speaking English are having //
S: .hhh yeah yeah they think that people who are talking twenty four seven on social media and all that ahhmm (.) .hhh you (.) you (.) where is your nationality or origin
M: I see
S: yeah wants to prove something so they think ahhm we speak Arabic in the street $ and everywhere $ so yeah WHY why social media needs to be different or you have a different face WHY
M: I see
S: so it is the same idea
M: so form which group you are?
S: ah ((laughs))
M: ((laughs))
S: no from the very beginning I have nothing to do with this at all to be honest completely completely (.) I think I am different
M: yeah ah how different//
S: I am very slow in writing Arabic and ahm (0.3) be aware also these people are very young (.) I mean either they are ahh (.) older than me older older generation yeah
M: yeah
S: and ahh younger than us but (.) I think it is weird to see these young ahh I do not know M: aha
S: but for me I am very slow $ even when I write poems or quotes or anything I write it in Arabish to ah to ahh write it fast
M: yeah
S: OR write them in English too but it is me you know (0.2) we all do this ahm (.) I mean even the younger generation they speak English most of the time
M: ahh do you mean those who ahm (.) writing Arabic $ or another//
S: No all of them .hh they speak English too ah very good English I hear them sometime $ and it is funny ahh

M: why $

S: Hhhh mmm I mean why the contradictions ((laughs)) you are Arabs but you speak English ahh and you write Arabic ((laughs))

M: ((laughs)) I see (.) so why do think they do that//

S: I do not know amm I mean I cannot give you an answer (.) they are different than us $ I do not know

M: so for you you write this because you are slow

S: yeah yeah the devices

M: aha

S: This STARTED as a habit ahh that I am used to write Arabish in English because it is our way and then ahhm THEN I forget to write in the keyboard or ahm or phone in Arabic

M: aha

S: honestly speaking now I mostly use English (.) ahhm most of the time in English English

M: hmm okay

S: so yeah most of the young people now they understand they understand all the words and they all talk like this

M: do you mean talk like//

S: yeah fArabish and English too

M: aha

S: so I write Englishf and if there is something that I feel that I cannot write it in ENGLISH then I use Arabish

M: but not everyone understands or knows f English right?

S: ahhmm (.) well (.) large number of people

M: yeah but//

S: in social media you are not dealing with ignorant people

M: hm

S: I mean all my friends they speak English and Arabish (.) and ahh (.) in social media we all communicate this way

M: okay

S: so yeah (.) they are well-educated and ahh even for people who cannot speak English (0.2) I think you know now everyone can understand even the basics (.) I mean all young people (.) young people can understand

M: aha

S: even if they are not good as us (0.1) ahh but they can speak the basics (.) yeah they have to (0.1) English is a must no question

M: I see

S: .hhhh (0.3) but yeah we use advanced words of course and we understand

M: we do you mean ahhm your//

S: I MEAN me and my friends of course (.) ahhm it is easy it is (.) it is I mean easy for us ahh even we understand each other from the context

M: so (.) they also know Arabish?

S: yeah of course we talk like this ahh all the time and we use English too (.) amm and Arabish everyone now can understand it f even if they are not the same
M: what (.) what do you mean not the same?
S: AAA (.) not everyone knows Arabish very well I mean (.) yes they can speak it but that does not mean ahh they are good f
M: can you explain more?
S: ahh I mean (.) ahh I cannot explain really but you can feel it f from the context maybe this person has just started using this
M: how $ can you tell?
S: it is easy for me (.) I can feel it ahhhh it is I mean FOR EXAMPLE different than what me and my friends are used to it
M: and what Arabish that you are used //
S: we know Arabish very well ((laughs))
M: ((laughs))
S: no honestly hhhm (.) because we have been using this for long now ahhm I mean we know of course
M: I see
S: but some are trying so hard and and ahhm(.) still you can tell I mean it is obvious for me $
M: so do you mean (0.1) I mean can you notice that from words or .hhh ahh his way or like what//
S: hmm (0.2) ahh it is hard to say how I mean FOR ME (.) it is (.) I can sense it (.) but I cannot explain it
M: yeah
S: ahh (.) do you know when YOU ARE very good in doing something and you can say this wrong or right (.) just because you know ahhh yeah that is it
M: aha
S: and this has started long time ago ah I mean I want to tell you about some websites $
M: yes
S: their origin is Arabic but but for example 6arab.com // [An Arabic songs website]
M: YEAH
S: it is written as 6 a r a b yeah (.) and also Kuwaiti it is q 8
M: right
S: you understand yeah (.) things like that
M: yeah
S: so yeah (.) that is all
M: right
S: so people from the past ahhm (0.2) yeah
M: and do you think everyone knows these (.)I mean like in Kuwaiti//
S: I will tell you something (.) lets say that someone in a language school or American for example $
M: hm
S: so everyone he has in social media most of them (.) ahh people he knows from school SO yeah similar education and everything
M: yeah

S: so they WILL TALK English all the time and if he wants to put an Arabic word in the middle of course he will put Arabish $ without a discussion
M: yeah
S: so he can talk English and the ahhHH (.) educational background $ will determine how he talks so $ I will I will not speak Arabic ahm Hhhh (.) I mean I know Arabic already we all do
M: yeah
S: but for English or this Arabish no (.) it depends
M: okay
S: yeah that is all
M: and you said you use both //
S: yeah I do
M: and why do you//
S: hhmm ( ) some people do not (0.2) maybe//
M: so why they do not?
S: maybe he wants to deliver a message to people that do not know $ for example
M: know//
S: English
M: aha
S: or (.) OR maybe his English is not good
M: hm
S: of course he speaks Arabish
M: so even if the English is not good (.) you can ahm SPEAK Arabish?
S: yeah (0.2) yes
M: so they are //
S: there are no ground rules in Arabish it is easy $
M: aha
S: BUT keep in mind that because there are no <u>ground rules</u> people are ahm writing <u>sixty</u> thousands words in million ways
M: yes
S: so ahhm (.) maybe you or someone writing [means 'for' in English] you will find people writing this in sixty million ways
M: aha
S: .hhh (0.2) so sometimes people (.) it is hard they get each other (.) or ( ) if Arabic it is Arabic if English you will KNOW it but this ahm yeah
M: yeah
S: so translation ah for this TO BE WRITTEN for example three a s or other ways three four because I think the four is for s h
M: really ahh I though the four only for the eeeeeh (.) t h
S: yeah $ it is (.) this is the normal but I saw $ some using the <u>four</u> for s h
M: aha (.) and how about you//
S: NO if I have to use the four it is for t h

M: aha
S: I think also in Egypt ah they use four for s h
M: I see interesting different use
S: yeah every country is different of course !
M: hmm yeah
S: yeah that is //
M: so there is//
S: yeah as I am telling you no ground rules
M: yes
S: so ahh yeah (.) but still when you read his words all his words are ahhm (.) easy and you can continue reading with no problem $ SO there is no need to stop or .hh ohhhh (.) to read again or ahh (.) oh what //
M: hm
S: and I do not know what//
M: aha
S: so when you can read and it is easy ah he is competent
M: I see
S: yeah I mean not only competent ah (.) he is a GOOD TEXTER
M: okay
S: but I think $ (0.1) he has to be good in English
M: so what the English//
S: you have to know the basic rules of it of course there are certain basic rules but (.) ah but you know that what are the numbers for like seven and three
M: hm
S: if you know then it is okay!
M: aha
S: there are $other people who are creating new thing (.) like_A [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is the combination of 'gh'] some people write it eight
M: really $ I have never seen this//
S: I swear I saw that (.) but it is wrong of course (.) people are trying to invent things but it is not working
M: and how do you write it?
S: g h
M: so you do not use the three and dot for example
S: no ahmm (.) in general (.) I only use now the three and seven because they are strong sounds ahm (.) but sometimes $ I use the h it depends
M: so why ahmm (.) I mean the h and you said //
S: g h
M: yeah $ (.) why do you use these letters not numbers?
S: I told you maybe $ (.) because I use English most of the time (.) I mean I am used to it $ and everyone of course can use these numbers
M: hm

S: but other than that like the six it is easy
M: yeah
S: it does not require a philosophy
M: I see
S: and the five I use k h and yeah
M: okay (.) and do your friends for example do the same
S: .hhhh my friends .Hhhh ahh my friends are similar to me I think (.) we use numbers but (.)
but we speak English too
M: okay (.) can we talk about your example?
S: yeah $ yeah
M: can you first tell me $ about the context of the conversation (.) I mean with whom for example and
ahh//
S: well hm it was with one of my best friends and I (.) I was texting him because ahm (.) I was waiting
for them to finish (0.1) I was (.) we were planning to meet ahh (.) that is it
M: okay (.) and why do you choose this specific example? hmm I mean is there a specific reason?
S: you mean to send it $
M: yeah I mean //
S: ahm no $ there is no reason (.) it is you know (.) JUST A CONVERSATION
M: okay (.) so first (.) this is you who said khalsto (.) or your friend?
S: yeah me
M: okay so here you used the k h//
S: yeah yeah I told you (.) ahm (.) I do not like to use the five (.) I mean it is different for me (.) I like k
and h
M: why is it different?
S: no I mean I don't use the numbers a lot $ and ahhm (0.1) at the same time I am used to write in
English SO it is natural to write this way
M: I see okay you said YOUR FRIENDS employ similar use to yours right?
S: yeah of course (.) you know they are my friends (.) for long time now and ahm (.) of course (.) we are
different
M: so do they use number five or ah//
S: .hhh (0.2) it depends but we all use it
M: and how about your friend in this conversation (.) I mean (.) he replied to your text la still
[means ‘no still' in English] both together Arabish and English
S: yeah $ yeah it is natural we all do this (.) <u>right</u>?
M: you mean mixing?
S: yeah it is normal even me if you see here ahhm I told him wen [This word is an abbreviation for the
English expression ‘when']
M: did you mean when or where?
S: no $ when I was (.) ahm waiting for them
M: and why did you write when w e n
S: abbreviation $ and faster we do this sometimes

M: okay (.) and is it common ahm (.) I mean people online know that w e n means when?
S: not necessarily but of course if they know English they will know this abbreviation (.) I write this way and my friends too
M: okay and your friend here again replied in Arabish and English and you said aha
S: yeah it means like I see (.) I got it
M: and here your friend used the number three//
S: yeah for £ ['ʌAC- is an Arabic title as in the Arab world, it is common to call a man by referring to elder son's name. For example if a person has a son called Ahmad, people will call him abo Ahmad means Ahmad's father. Here in this context, '4^ ɹ?II' is ‘Abo Abed', which means Abed's father]
M: is this a common feature?
S: what exactly?
M: I mean the use of three?
S: YEAH (.) of course I mean for example you cannot put ahhm FIVE for£ (.) no there are fixed things if someone will do this $ ahhh (.) this is stupid
M: and how about you (.) do you use the three //
S: yeah sometimes (.) it depends if I need for example to say a for sure (0.1) I will use the three
M: okay (0.2) ahhh (.) is there anything you want to say (.) in relation to the example
S: no ahm
M: okay
S: yeah I am tired of talking ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) I am sorry we are done anyways (.) is there anything else you would like to add?
S: I have an opinion $ (.) .hhhhh (.) ahhhh I think $ to solve all this instead of confusion in social media let those who speak Arabic speak (.) and those $who speak English to speak ahh (.) BECAUSE not everyone is fluent in Arabish (.) and let the Arabish only ahhh be between friends
M: aha
S: but only people who know Arabish speak it (.) please $ honestly (0.2) with their friends and ah I hate $ these inventions (.) and for general discussion they should only use Arabic or English
M: okay
S: yes that is all (.) am done ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) perfect thank you
S: thank you

Appendix 17: Transcribed Interview 7 – Huda

Date: 14th of September 2014

Duration: 29 minutes and 03 seconds

Social Group: Middle Class

M: Hi
H: ((laughs)) hi
M: so can you tell me when did you (.) ahh use Arabish first time?
H: ahhh (0.2) hm
M: the Arabish
H: mmmm //
M: I mean almost //
H: first time I used it ahh almost ( ) I can say seven year ago
M: seven years ago //
H: yeah maybe before seven years I guess (.) not sure
M: okay $ and do you remember why what was the reason (.) why did you use it
H: ahh I do not know (.) it was a common language in the internet ((phone ringing))
M: hmm//
H: with the yahoo and chat I mean it was ( ) the chat language //
M: you can answer your phone
H: ahh no it is fine (0.2) it was $ the chat language that ah I guess it was the common language and $everyone was talking about it so I felt ahhh I mean I was going with the mood their mood
M: whose mood you mean?
H: ahhhm I mean the people who WERE USING this language (.) I mean in the internet
M: did you know $ these people?
H: No not personally//
M: aha
H: but I used to see this ahh this language
M: soo you did this ahh because you saw others //
H: yes at the beginning//
M: yeah
H: I saw many people using this and it was the language they know and understand//
M: yeah
H: and plus $ they will laugh if you do not know it (0.1) they make you feel [This word has no equivalent translation in the English language. Although, in the classic Arabic this word can use to refer to people who live in villages, in this context the case is different. In the Saudi dialect, this word constitutes negative

description of an individual such as: uncivilized or uneducated member, bad taste of dressing and appearance and unsophisticated way of talking] ((laughs))

M: ((laughs))

H: so I was going with the flow

M: okay (.) so how did you lean it?

H: hmmm $I do not remember

M: you do not

H: honestly no (.) I do not remember how $ because because ah I did not have an idea (.) it was $ the challenge was ahh you have to know some letters (0.2) if they were numbers (0.2)

M: hm

H: and the words (.) maybe it is easy to write the Arabic word to ahh to English writing (.) pronounce it right but but it is hard to know that 6 is [AjThis Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘t'] this was the language you had to learn

M: hmm

H: but sometimes you ahh from the shape of the WORD (.) you can (0.2) you can figure the letter in the middle

M: aha so ahh you mean when you read the word?

H: yes yes you can know the word

M: aha so there is no problem with meaning?//

H: NO//

M: I mean for you ahh you//

H: it is easy you can figure the meaning

M: okay $ahh and do you this (.) I mean with whom you use this//

H: now I do not use it that much

M: why (.) you stopped?

H: I mean no of course $ I use it but ahh with my friends sometimes I use Arabic (.) it is better

M: aha so ahh can you tell me more//

H: mmm I think ahh you know sometimes YOU HAVE to when you see someone is using it .hhh you do not one anyone $ to laugh (.) with my friends it is normal

M: aha (0.2) so ahhm all your friends are using Arabic? or it is only ahh //

H: $ we use all (.) we can speak Arabic or Arabish WHY

M: hm

H: because when I see it written it annoys me (0.2) and two I feel it is ahhh breaking ahhh honestly from the grammar hmm and vocabulary of English so ahh I do not like to talk this way ahhh (0.3) but of course I can it is an easy language ahhh so ahh//

M: so how is it related to the English? I mean affects the English you feel //

H: no $ when I write I feel English Arabic//

M: hm

H: an Arabic and English word will be produced and ahhh I mean I feel (0.1) that ahhhm that $ my English //

M: hm

H: my practice is ahh (0.3) it affects my practice maybe
M: yeah okay
H: SO for me to make myself better in English (.) in relation to the vocabulary and grammar .hhh I do not try to practice myself on doing this
M: hm
H: OR I speak Arabic normally
M: hm
H: I do not like to break the language
M: yeah so ahh you said (.) it annoys you ahh do you mean //
H: because you feel that ahh letters next to each other^ they are connected (0.2) .hh and when you read it (.) your mind is programmed to know English language in this shape (.) so $ it is hard to read it (.) the SHAPE is English but you read it (.) Arabic
M: hm
H: so I FEEL Hhh it annoys my eyes
M: okay I understand
H: yes
M: so when you talk to people (.) you use Arabic?
H: no most of the time I use ahhh Arabish//
M: but you said//
H: with my friends (.) we use both ahh Arabish and Arabic//
M: so ahh how about others//
H: but I use Arabish with ahh people $ who are using Arabish
M: okay (.) and ahh how about English?
H: .hhhhh
M: do you use it?
H: ahhh not so much honestly ahhh I mean my English is not so good so ahh ((laughs)) I try to avoid these situations
M: ((laughs)) okay clever
H: it is so rarely I use English but ahh you know not everyone using Arabic hmmm around me (.) not everyone (0.3) rarely (speak Arabic (0.2) $ I feel they become or take this language as a way of PRESTIGE
M: hmm
H: or ahh or it is the common Internet language (.) the trend (0.2) or ahh it is the easiest way that I mean we communicate
M: hmm
H: some think this way
M: so by (.) prestige what do you mean? I mean how can it be seen as ahhm a prestige thing?
H: if we were (.) ahhh we do have this belief that if you know this and do it $ not everyone does it .hhhhh but ahh maybe more in rich people I guess their mentality
M: mentality (.) so do you think (.) ahh rich people you mean think//

H: because it is $ their trend maybe ahh you know English language and ahh .hhhh this with English letters so ahh every time when you become $ against the TREND they think of you as ahh an outsider or ahhh they feel ahhhh you are AJA [This word has no equivalent translation in the English language. Although, in the classic Arabic this word can be used to refer to people who live in villages, in this context, the case is different. In the Saudi dialect, this word constitutes a negative description of an individual such as: uncivilized or uneducated member, bad taste of dressing and appearance and unsophisticated way of talking]

M: hmm

H: or backward ahhm or he does not develop himself (.) but they never see this of you ahh as someone with a principle

M: hmm

H: or that you have AN OPENION (.) you are not like them ahhm so you are different because they are following the trendy (.) they are developed and (more civilized and educated ahh but you are not

M: who are these people (.) I mean ahh the ones who see you different?

H: not only me (.) I mean anyone//

M: do you know them? (.) I mean are they your friends or ahh

H: no many maybe ahh you know (rich people ahhh it is only used by young people of course and ahhh (0.2) I do not know exactly but ahhh yeah//

M: ahh you mean only rich people (.) judge or use or do you //

H: ahh young for example (if you want to write a conversation and ahh you do not want your parents to understand (.) what are you talking about

M: hmm

H: I might be yeah ahh nice as a secret way I mean ahh but as I said most of the people who are using this are young ahhh thirty five and below not more ahh yeah

M: and are they all rich ahh because I guess ahh (.) you say//

H: yeah I mean some rich ahhhm because .hhhhh you know create this (.) I do not know and hmm of you show different language ahhhm maybe you are uneducated or something

M: I see SO you do not like it $ so much//

H: no ( )

M: okay ahh and //

H: you know ahh it is a matter of (.) if you say ahh education it will be related again to the mentality (0.3) because education is related to everything (0.3) the more educated you are (.) the more you become aware of things (.) some people $ see themselves//

M: hm

H: they feel ahhhm (.) new trend (.) ahm depends on how you see it

M: hm right so do you mean you mean Hhh (0.2) Arabish is related to the education or ahh? Can you elaborate more?//

H: I do not judge (.) I DO NOT SEE (.) because you do not speak this language (.) you are an empty person (.) it is Hhhh the people how they feel comfortable (.) about it (.) they will do it (.) me $ for example I do not like it (.) ahh

M: hm

H: so I will not be like them (.) although I have to use it sometimes $ they might think ahhm am uneducated or ignorant (.) which is the opposite
M: okay ahhm and (.) what//
H: plus you cannot speak this language (.) unless you know English
M: yes
H: you need to know at least how to pronounce the English letters (.) how you will change them to Arabic
M: you mean the sounds?
H: yes yes the sounds
M: ahh SO YOU MEAN TEH BASICS?
H: yeah possibly the basics (.) but ah I do not think a person who knows the basics will be interest (.) ahhh to speak it
M: hm
H: unless they are other pressure that he wants to be with his own group
M: hmmm
H: I mean ahh his group $ if they are all excited and he felt he is an outsider
M: hmm
H: it could be a strong motives ahh instead of being only basic it will be stronger
M: aha but so (.) do you mean his group is more competent than him?
H: maybe (.) it could be but sometimes ( ) they are all the same and ahhh maybe they all want to be same level (.) showing off maybe ((laughs))
M: ((laughs))
H: yeah
M: and how about you? (.) I mean ahh do you use it because of your group ahh (0.2) you said earlier sometimes you ahh//
H: Hhhh I do you know but if someone talk to me in Arabic (.) I respond in Arabic of course
M: okay (.) I want to go back to a point you made earlier ahh when you talked about using Arabish as a code from family or parents//
H: YEAH if my mother is next to me and $ I want to talk to my sister (.) and I do not want my mother to know what I am talking about
M: hm
H: I can write this language (.) my mother cannot understand it (.) because she does not know her English language is very weak
M: hm
H: and ahh $ she will not be able to understand WHEN SHE READS the meaning of number three (.) six and eight and seven and .hh she will not understand (.) so it can be used AS AWAY as a unreadable language ahh I mean for parents and ahhhm it is possible this is an advantage of this language (.) but ahh other advantages
M: hm
H: I see ahhm it is because of pressure ahh as I told you and it can weaken English and Arabic languages

M: so you would not recommend its use (.) ahhm you do not think it can help in enhancing the English competence?
H: ahhm no (.) I mean there are other ways of course (.) ahhm to think about the word many times and see it in the screen (.) ahhm it can be a muscle training ahhm I mean for the brain
M: hm
H: for example (.) if I want $ to talk about its advantages (.) I can say many things but IN RETURN
M: hm
H: when we come to talk about the English language (.) when a person speaks (.) what are the vocabularies used (.) how many grammatical mistakes he made (.) how many sentences are not (.) completed
M: hm
H: things that are hmm weakening or we can see its negatives $ are more than its positives (.) the only one who said I could learn the sounds you can TEACH THEM the sounds by other ways
M: hmm
H: it does not have to be this (.) the only way
M: yeah ahh but Arabish is different than a language (.) ahm for example we are talking the dialect not classic Arabic or English right?
H: yeah but (.) no it is a language because you speak it ahh it is a way to communicate
M: yes but you know in the dialect ahhm for examples (.) the grammar is a bit loose than the proper language and //
H: but still we have some grammars (.) even in Arabish (.) and to be honest with you WHY do we have to imitate others (.) our language is Arabic and it is the religious language we have to keep it (.) but if everyone is talking this language Arabic will be lost (.) right or not?
M: YEAH maybe (.) but we do not speak the classic Arabic//
H: EVEN THOUGH (.) it is all Arabic (.) the grammar ahh grammar will be lost (.) I mean in Saudi or us as Arabs (.) you know
M: hm (.) what//
H: YEAH so the language $ and ahh grammar will be affected
M: okay $ ahh what do you mean the grammar//
H: .hhhhhh ahhh I cannot think of an example now (.) we have some grammars of course
M: you mean in Arabic//
H: even in Arabish
M: DO YOU MEAN//
H: the grammars in Arabish itself (.) for sure $ it has a grammar (.) for example the numbers
M: okay (.) sooo (0.2) here for example (0.1) in your example you used different numbers ahh you used seven two times and ahhm you also used the six and three//
H: yeah seven with ^1^- [means ‘thank God'] because of the £_[This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘h']
M: do you always use seven for £_[This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘h'] (.) I mean did you ever use for example the h for this sounds?

H: ahh no it will not be Arabish
M: so it is a fixed letter for you?
H: hmmmm maybe (0.2) YES if I use (.) you have to use numbers in Arabish (.) but I want them to pronounce it as [means ‘thank God'] so number (.) I put seven because it is considered £_[This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘h']
M: okay and also here why did you put several eeez in jkl [means ‘hi’ in English]
H: because in Arabic if you want to stretch the word (.) for example when we talk you say so I put many e for the stretching (.) it is like you hear it (.) I mean ahhm when you read it (.) as if the person is in front of you
M: yes right okay and how about the numbers six and three here
H: easy six is for [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest sound in English is a strong ‘t’] we all know (.) and ahh the three if for £ [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest sound in English is a strong ‘a’] (.) you cannot use other numbers for these sounds
M: okay
H: it is only in Arabish
M: so would this be a kind of grammar or convention ahh I mean fixed numbers
H: of course $ you cannot use other numbers (.) here for example [means ‘how are you’] some people write double ee or a before the k or (.) ahhm for example a e
M: hm
H: it depends on you
M: and how do you write it?
H: ahhm maybe k e f k
M: okay (.) ahhm okay do you know why your friend wrote k e a //
H: it depends $ every person writes how he sees it (.) there is no one way of the words (.) no structure for it
M: what do you mean?
H: when we talk about the alphabet (.) there is always a standard for it (.) there is like a structure that based on it (.)$ you write a word or correct it (.) even in the way it is written ahhh
M: yeah
H: there are basics (.) rules this has no rules (.) it does not have basic ahh the main rules only (0.3) the letters which are seven ahh nine//
M ( )//
H: six $ we all know that these numbers (.) has certain letters BUT there is no specific structure for writing (.) $ for example if I am going to say [means ‘hi’] I can write it with one e or maybe three e or four (.) it has no standard .hhhh
M: but can we use other letters than e in jkl [means ‘how are you’]?
H: ahhm (.) no only this word BUT you can use it many times (.) it depends ahhm (.) aahhh (
) depends on his voice tone (.)$ it depends (.) honestly there is no structure
M: okay so (0.2) with these different uses I mean eventually can you get the meaning?
H: $ you can understand (.) ways differ

M: hm
H: and the way it is displayed can be different but will reach same result
M: hmm
H: this is something agreed on
M: and do you feel (.) competent in this ahhm for example//
H: Yeah I used it (.) I am good ahhm because we discuss and they interact with me for long time and ahhm I think it means we can communicate (.) it never hmm for example I do not remember that someone told me ahhm explain what do you mean
M: yeah
H: there was no questioning about my talk (.) ahhm this can show that my way of talking is reachable ( ) and ahhm people understand me of course .hhh I can write Arabish very easily ahhm I do not need to think twice of the words
M: okay and how about ahh your friend here in the example (.) I mean is she competent as you?
H: hmmm ((laughs)) yeah I think so but honestly I would not write [means 'how are you'] as she did (.) yeah I told you k e f
M: okay and she also wrote the e letter many times//
H: yeah for stretching of course ( )
M: and how about the eight here she used $ did you know which sound she ahhm //
H: YES the J [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest sound in English is a strong 'g'] you can only use the eight (.) no other numbers can give this sound
M: okay and ahhm so Hhhh is this a close friend of yours?
H: yes very much (.) we went to school together (.) I knew her for long and she wanted to ask me about a job she wants to apply for
M: okay//
H: but ((laughs)) I did not have any idea (.) she wasted her time
M: ((laughs)) $ do you always communicate Arabish with her?
H: hmmm it depends (.) no most of the time I guess
M: okay (.) perfect thank you for this
H: you are welcome
M: do you want to add something?
H: hmm (.) no thank you ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) okay

Appendix 18: Transcribed Interview 8 – Sara

Date: 19th of January 2014

Duration: 38 minutes and 10 seconds

Social Group: Middle Class

S: okay I will answer everything ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) great that will be very helpful
S: let's go$
M: so do you remember the first time you use Arabish?
S: this amazing language?
M: yes this amazing //
S: ahh ahhhm long time ago ( )
M: okay //
S: am still young ((laughs))
M: yes I know ((laughs))
S: maybe (.) ten years yeah with the internet or less I think
M: and why did you start using it t?
S: BECAUSE it was something new at that time I mean ahh for us even in society ahh an at that time (.) I WAS A TEENAGER
M: hmm
S: sot IT WAS ahh this was popular among us (.) it was a movement that spread ahh this this amazing language (.) this new language so we love speaking this language
M: and ahh with whom did you use (.) like how often?
S: NO I used it to use it in messages tand messenger
M: and with whom you used to chat?
S: ahh (0.2) ahmm //
M: I mean with people you know t?
S: no tahhhh it it was with everyone it was popular among girls and boys as well t ( ) but they were at the same age category (.) I mean it is something new
M: what do you mean category? Can explain more?
S: .hhhh I think rich people ((laughs))
M: ((laughs))
S: no I mean maybe rich people^ liked to use it (.) I think the cool kids used it more because you know ahh they travel and English ahh something new (.) they invent this ahh ( )
M: okay
S: why do not ask me in English? I know English ((laughs))

M: ((laughs)) I do not mind asking you in English of course (.) it is just in order to deliver the question //
S: I am kidding ((laughs)) it is okay continue in Arabic yeah it is better
M: okay if you do not mind of course (0.2) so when you said rich people do you mean it was used only by them?
S: I think ahh yeah maybe before it was new$ (.) it is not an easy language you know ahh so they know it [A] because the English
M: so does English have a relation to know Arabish?
S: OF COURSE if you know Arabish you know English
M: but we write the words in Arabic right?
S: yeah but you still ahhm you still use English you know letters and numbers (.) it is hard
M: and was it hard for you to learn it? Ahhm I mean at first //
S: maybe at the beginning .hhhh it is not easy it is not easy at all
M: aha okay (.) ahm can you explain more?
S: so ahh yeah not easy
M: so (.) do you think it is easier now $I mean by time or ahh //
S: I feel ahhm I feel for me I feel when I see something people commenting (.) writing a comment if all of them are writing in this language $I feel EMBARRASSED (.) so it becomes a must (.) I have to write like them
M: hmm
S: but if they were not WRITING I mean half of them in Arabic and the other half $ in this language I write in Arabic
M: and why do you feel embarrassed? Why do you feel you have to?
S: no I DO NOT LIKE to be DIFFERENT among them $suddenly I use this language while all of them writing this this ahhm language
M: so is it because that you want them to understand you? I mean if you write in Arabic what would they think?
S: YES YES I feel it is of course more sophisticated when you write English Arabic
M: do you mean in general or ahhh in these situation or //
S: yes YES yeah (.) yeah with them and in general English Arabic
M: and how about if you have a conversation with people who are just communicating Arabic (.) which one will you use?
S: ahhh (0.4) Arabic or sometimes Arabish (.) Arabic yeah
M: why?
S: .hhhh hmm I do not know (.) Arabish is not easy but of course I know$ how to speak it (.) it depends on the people and the context
M: aha
S: I feel ahh ( ) you know what I feel $ I feel that
M: yeah
S: people who are using it (.) people that used it
M: hm
S: they are used $ to the English keyboard

M: aha
S: (0.3) the English I mean these people $are used to it in their business they are used to write a lot of English read a lot in English ahhm they are
M: hm
S: used to the English keyboard ahmm their hands are very used to the English keyboard
M: hmm
S: you know (.) I mean their lifestyle they love English
M: so you believe that because of their love of English $they are //
S: yeah he is not used $ because it is hard to CHANGE his brain or switch the keyboard from Arabic Arabic from eng eng English to Arabic no from English
M: yeah
S: I mean I mean when for example ahhm someone is studying abroad let us say (.) so he is used to English it is not easy $ it is not easy M: yeah
S: to switch your brain he is used to English all all his writings are on English English Eglish
M: hm
S: so he sees that it is EASIER to communicate with people that he writes $with the English Arabic the letters (.) and numbers WHY because when when
M: hm
S: if he will write this completely in English maybe$ maybe he cannot deliver his feelings to to to other people M: yeah so he is used to //
S: yeah I mean for example maybe you use Arabish because your English is good ahh you are used to it $ so he does not want to write in Arabic yeah he cannot deliver his feelings in Arabic (.) he and his friends are not used to it you got it
M: yeah I know what you mean
S: even if the other person his friend or something (.) is competent in English he speaks Arabish to convey his feelings but he cannot speak Arabic (.) it is embarrassing for them
M: hmm
S: and ahhh and he amm he does not want to switch his keyboard (.) this can be exhausted for his brain it is hard SO I feel$ that people who love English love to read English write English a lot they love always always always English
M: hmm
S: this way is easier for them in order to communicate with others
M: and how about the people that you speak to (.) are they using Arabic or Arabish?
S: (0.2) ahh I think (0.3) half and half yeah exactly half half
M: so half of them write Arabic and the other half //
S: yeah half half exactly
M: and why do you think they are different //
S: no Arabish mixed with English (.) they all the same $ the same way of thinking
M: do you mean (.) the half half groups or the ones who are mixing?
S: no people who mix are from the other half (.) but maybe they mix because they know English better than us (.) maybe they are more used to English

M: yeah
S: they cannot switch their brain $ right all their friends maybe lifestyle you know cool ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) I do not know why you laugh at this word
S: YES I know ((laughs)) I swear I do not know too
M: okay (.) interesting (.) so you were saying they are using English//
S: yeah even on their phones (.) their brains are used to this English English English .hhh but they do not want to speak English
M: okay
S: so they speak our dialect (.) they speak Arabic with English
M: and how about using Arabic $is it cool as well?
S: NO no no ((laughs)) it is not (.)it is normal but no$ not with them
M: who are they?
S: who are using the Arabish ahh I mean I cannot use Arabic it is not cool at all you know^ (.) it is old and they do not want to speak English as well so they WILL SPEAK Arabic but using the English letters because they love it (.) they can deliver their feelings and information
M: hm
S: so if they want to speak Arabic they use Arabish (.) it much easier for them
M: I see and how about you? I mean do prefer to speak Arabic $ (.) more or?
S: I told you $ with the people who are speaking Arabish I speak the same
M: yeah (.) and do you find it difficult to use Arabish?
S: ahh I have problems with spelling in English (0.2) it is not easy I told you not easy
M: but what does the English spelling has to do with Arabish? I mean (.) we are communicating Arabic right (.) but English letters right //
S: THERE IS no spelling in Arabish because it is Arabic English ( ) no there is //
M: okay
S: but I AM (.) I DO NOT LIKE the English keyboard (.) I do not know
M: mm
S: I am me for me (.) I am not so much used to the English keyboard
M: hmm
S: but if someone talked to me with this this language I respond fusing this language
M: I see so how do you write Arabish? I mean do you have a personal way (.) or because you talked about spelling//
S: yes fI know I know the letters (.) but I do not like the English keyboard
M: hm
S: I am not used to the ENGLISH KEYBOARD
M: okay
S: but there are no specific spellings
M: do you mean words?
S: I mean for example ( ) I KNOW that number seven means r [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘h'] everyone knows that (.)

.hh and five means £ [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘kh'] everyone knows thatf

M: okay (.) I see in your example that you use the seven twice //

S: YES because it means £ [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘h'] this is easy everyone knows that (0.3) the problem is in the spelling (.)

M: can you give me an example?

S: ahh (0.2) I do not remember but you know (.) spellings is a problem if you do not know English

M: so you only use the seven//

S: sure fyou cannot use other numbers

M: okay and how about the number four here in your example? I mean which sound //

S: it is 2_[This Arabic letter represents the sound 'th' in English] everyone knows that (.) my friend want to say £[This Arabic letter represents the sound 'th' in English]

M: I saw some people using the_t h for this [This Arabic letter represents the sound 'th' in English] instead of four (.) have you ever used that? I mean hm (.) it is you friend here who used the four? Do you//

S: yeah (.) no I DO NOT THINK it is a right way but maybe yeah I do not know maybe (.) I think because of the English maybe

M: what do you mean? //

S: they want to write in English I told you $ people mixing but I use the four always always^

M: aha

S: it is their style maybe (.) but I ALWAYS use the same things same numbers (.) I do not change it is fixed yeah all the time $some people change (.) I do not know I do not like to change

M: and how about number eight here (.) your friend wrote//

S: yeah

M: this is your friend//

S: number eight is for 6 [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong ‘g']

M: do you use the same NUMBER//

S: yes same thing (.) number eight always

M: okay .hhh and also she used the five and six here

S: same numbers of course (.) the six for example for [This Arabic sound has no equivalent sound in the English phonetic system. The closest English sound is a strong‘t']

M: okay and it is always fixed?

S: yes yes |

M: aha okay (.) and you reduplicate some letters in you example here (.) for example the e (.) and also your friend the r so why do //

S: because you say <u>jjAi?</u> [This word indicates the English question, are you coming? And the participant pronounced this word strongly] so I write what I say exactly (0.2) also I want to confirm that she is coming too$ .hhh ahhh (.) my friend is the same she is saying [This word indicates the English question, have you decided yet? and the participant pronounced this word strongly] because you know it took me a week to decide if am going to my friend Noura or not ((laughs)) no she is nice honestly

M: ((laughs)) okay
S: so I change my mind SEVERAL TIMES ((laughs)) I made her feel like a crazy ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) why $
S: when she text me she wanted to know my final answer $because I told her I will pick her up on my way to Noura
M: is that why you were laughing ((laughs))
S: yeah ((laughs)) I laughed at her reaction
M: so you only this face to show //
S: I like this face (.) but you can use other things
M: like what?
S: ahh it is up to you (.) here for example (.) I wrote H many times (.) because I was laughing so much
M: and the lol here //
S: no(it is not me
M: YES I know //
S: she was fed up with me (.) one O it means she is not laughing or (for example not funny
M: okay ahhm (.) and I want to ask you about this example (.) was it with a close friend ? I mean hmm //
S: she is like a sister (.) I see her all the time maybe ahhm daily or ( ) she is one of the close friends we are on the same age
M: okay hooo why did you specifically choose this example?
S: .hhhh (0.3) no no (0.2) it is not something private I mean the CONVERSATION is normal nothing private
M: okay
S: are you going to put this in a projector
M: what do you mean //
S: projector ((laughs)) I am kidding
M: ((laughs)) do you want me to present this in a projector ((laughs))
S: yes ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) well all our conversation is private as you know
S: yes I know ((laughs)) I am kidding
M: you are funny (.) do you feel like you want to add something or say (0.1) anything?
S: hmm (.) no thank you
M: thank you
S: thank you for your time

Appendix 19: Transcribed Interview 9 – Noor

Date: 18th of June 2014
Duration: 26 minutes and 55 seconds
Social Group: Middle Class

M: hi (.) lets start
NR: helloo
M: so (.) tell me about your experience (0.2) with the Arabish?
NR: ahmmm (.) my expereineeeence (.) I will tell you//
M: I mean (.) when did you first started for example $ I mean
NR: ahh (.) I do not know but ahhh (.) I started couple of years ago and ahhh (.) I felt is so important honestly (.) and ahh something I had to learn and write//
M: okay
NR: yeah
M: why did you feel it is important (.) I mean why did you use it?
NR: something ahh everyone around me does this $ so ahh I had too and ahhh then ahhh it is embarrassing (.) you know//
M: how is it embarrassing what//
NR: I mean EVERYONE writes this (.) it is not good that you are in this age ahh (.) and in this period//
M: ah
NR: you do not know how to write it
M: okay and ahhhm (.) and which whom did you use it (.) I mean normally//
NR: ahhh I use it of course $ with people around me that they use it (.) it is not okay if you do not respond (.) ahmm the same way ahh (.) I mean it is not right if someone speak to you this language and you write another (.) maybe he will not get you (.) unless someone older $ yes you have to use his language
M: what do you mean older?
NR: I mean (0.2) old people (.) it is disrespectful to speak to them this way (.) in English letters (.) you have to speak Arabic (.) if you write in English it is like you are laughing at him $ or ahh soo ahhh it is disrespectful in our society (.) YOU KNOW
M: yeah (.) so you do not use //
NR: no $ no not Arabish (.) but among young people (.) it is normal we speak this (.) and ahhh soo yeah ( )
M: yeah (.) and do you like Arabish?
NR: HONESTLY (.) yes (.) very much (0.1) first it is a nice way to write and is so organized (.) ahh it teaches you English (.) new and ahhh $ something prestigious//
M: okay (.) how do you ahh//
NR: it is nice

M: okay (.) your saying it teaches you English//
NR: yes (.) sure
M: how did you feel it help$ how?
NR: .hhh (.) I do not know (.) I mean hard to explain ((laughs)) but ahhhm (.) the idea you are writing English letters (.) you know what are the letters $ how to write them and ahh (.) their place and ahhm you know which ahh which letter (.) and ahh this letter goes with this (.) same sound $ (.) you have to know (0.1) and ah it is well know that anyone write it (.) he knows English (.) you can ask someone who does know $ English//
M: yeah
NR: to write this (0.2) he cannot (.) even if he does not know the whole language $ but at least $ he should know the letters (.) I mean when you cannot ASK someone to write Arabish if he does not know the English letters (.) ahh you cannot
M: I see (.) okay ahhh (0.3) and how about (.) you say it is prestigious//
NR: yeah
M: how is it prestigious (.) or new//
NR: well ahhh (.) NEW everyone knows it is new and modern (.) only ahh (.) I mean young people know this (.) you know not old
M: yeah
NR: .hhhh (0.2) I do not know but the feeling is enough (.) it is like English (.) ahh I mean you write English number and letter (.) so of course $ it is like the English $
M: aha
NR: my sister (.) at least it is prestigious (.) it is different than Arabic I mean it gives you a good feeling that you can speak like them (.) you are educated and *cool* ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) so you do not write in Arabic?
NR: .hhhh (.) ahhhm I do $ but to be honest not with everyone
M: do you mean it depends //
NR: of course $ my mother (0.2) my family (.) my friends $ it depends I mean (0.2) but honestly no I mean ahhh (.) if someone talk to me with this language of course $ I will respond in the same way (.) I like this to be honest (.) it is right that Arabic is EASIER (.) but you cannot use it with everyone (.) but it is okay (.) we are between us (.) I mean normal
M: aha
NR: yeah (.) so ahhh (.) even my relatives we use this
M: you mean Arabish or the ahh (.) Arabic?
NR: Arabic (.) normal it is our language I mean (.) but of course the Arabish (.) more prestigious ((laughs))
M: so you like the English beca//
NR: of course $ it is good for you if ahh you know this language (.) that is why I enter ahh the course (.) to learn English
M: Why did you enter this course (.) ahhm (.) I mean//
NR: Ahhm I love English a lot $(0.3) amm you know ahh when when ahh I entered ahh you know it is very important (0.1) ah even in your work ahh no even in you normal life (.) very important (0.2) I mean to talk to people understand them and understand you $ (0.2) ahmm first thing $ that made me enter (.) is that I love learning the English ahh English (.) I mean my English is very weak (.) YOU KNOW at the university they do

not teach you the important things (.) very weak ahh they just give you the basic of the computer (0.2) it is so important and at the same time $ ahhhhhm (.) I want to change my job (.) because my job here (.) you know $ (.) private schools low income (.) at the same time I want to work at the bank (.) but the problem the bank require a good English perfect (.) SO to be good (.) I entered this institution ahhh (0.2)

M: hm (.) so you are learning English to have more income and //

NR: I DO NOT KNWO ((laughs)) yeah (.) but it is very important in life (0.2) and then (.) you see ah you see we are ah I mean eee people are developed $ it is done (.) EVERYONE speaks English (.) everyone has to speak English you cannot not know and speak English (.) in this time ahh basically it is a shame that you do not know how to speak shame on you (0.2) even when you deal with people speaking English $ tam okay you got one or two words (.) but it is so embarrassing that you do not know the rest of the words (.) you understand

M: yeah (.) but why do you feel it is embarrassing (.) our language is Arabic//

NR: yeah but (0.3) even the Arabic no one is using it now ahh and the English you feel ahh really you are educated $ knowledgeable ahh you understand ah I feel it is so important honestly (.) ahhh it is important important and ahh honestly

M: hm

NR: this Arabish helped me a lot (.) to practice ahh the English and at the same I see a lot of people (.) you know $ using it and ah the new I saw many people using it with the English (.) another (.)

M: you mean//

NR: okay (.) I understand the Arabic part but the English I want to understand it $ I want to be like this (.) I want to writ in English and understand it

M: aha (.) you mixing English and ah//

NR: yes together

M: and where did you see this (.) I mean ahh who was writing the English and Arabic?

NR: I do not know $ but I saw some people online (.) I did not try to talk to them

M: okay

NR: but you know ((laughs)) the spoiled people $ you know //

M: hm (.) can you explain more

NR: I MEAN the ones who know English since they were kinds (.) told you most of them from a different level (.) of course the ones who learn English since he was a child (0.2) is better million times from the ones who did not

M: WHY//

NR: they master the language better (.) and ahh you know (.) they are used to it (.) I mean ahh for example $ their lives are different of course (0.3) they travel a lot (.) they speak English a lot (.) this is their life

M: aha (0.3) okay (.) and why do you feel that they are spoiled?

NR: of course $ they are different (.) I mean for example hhh (.) they do not care about jobs (.) ahh more luxurious (.) ahh the jobs are different ahh they travel and like that (.) they are spoiled eemm (0.3) all these are considered parts form being spoiled ((laughs)) on the contrary (.) I wish ahh (.) I ahh (.) if I were spoiled

M: ahh so (.) yooou want to learn English (.) so you can understand what are they saying AND to be spoiled $

NR: yeah (.) ((laughs)) I WANT to know what are they saying and respond (.) and know how to talk (.) ahh you do not want to write one or two English words in a wrong way

M: ahh
NR: and they they will laugh at you (.) so that is why ahh I prefer to speak Arabish (.) most most of the time (.) ahh but I feel that my English Thank God (0.2) ahh (.) Is better than before.
M: ah that is good (.) how do you feel it is better ahm I mean in which ways?
NR: .Hhhh (0.3) ahhm (.) I do not know (.) but it is a feeling (.) I mean now for example I can read words $ with confidence (.) even sometimes I try to talk with confidence (.) ahh I am happy
M: that is really good//
NR: ahh and if I think to move to the bank $ this is so important $ ahh with God willing ahh I am thinking to deal with (.) when I FINISHED this course (.) I apply for the bank and deal with the clines (.) the the ahh clines high class you know (.) I mean (.) I have some relatives working at the bank and they told me it is nice to deal with them (.) it is more convenient and prestigious for you
M: but how is working with the high is prestigious?
NR: of course absolutely (.) it differs than dealing with ordinary people (.) ahh the dealing would be more sophisticated (.) ahh even when they deal with you or ahhh for example no noise $ (.) even the way they speak to you (.) you feel it is sophisticated
M: okay
NR: I mean HOW IS IT POSSIBLE to talk to them (.) if you do not understand English (.) it is embarrassing (0.2) it is it important to have your own prestige in society (.) you do not want people to say you are uneducated
M: and at your work now (.) you do not speak English?
NR: ((laughs)) no I hope
M: ((laughs)) why?
NR: no to be honest (.) there is no context to use English (.) ahm I mean with whom (.) and why (.) no need here ahm you deal with teachers (.) all of them Arabs and Saudis (.) ahh and the mentalities are different
M: what do you mean?
NR: I mean these (.) they do not know Arabish (.) either they are moms or elder ladies (.) you know ahh (.) all what they speak is Arabic (.) you know if I speak to them in Arabish $
M: yes
NR: they will have a heart attack ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) to this extend $ (.) why
NR: they will see (.) what does she want ((laughs)) what does she feel
M: they do not like ahm I mean against//
NR: yes of course (.) it is not ahhh (.) not everyone likes Arabish (.) and here in a school (.) they will say education and students (.) a lot of things $ mentalities differ (.) YOU KNOW
M: yeah (.) so you only use it with ahh friends//
NR: yes Usually $ (.) with my friends ahm or my relatives of course (.) who are using it (0.3) but for example (.) if someone does not know it (.) no $ .hhh (.) ahhh it depends (.) sometimes (.) for example $ Arabic or ahh Arabish (.) it depends (.) there is nothing specific
M: aha
NR: but personally (.) I told you (.) I like it (0.2) ahh and there are a lot of people not using it $ because it is hard (.) it is not easy by the way
M: yeah (.) how?

NR: I mean you have to know the letters $ not easy the language (.) and it takes time to learn it (.) that is why not everyone can speak it
M: okay (.) I see (.) but some people say when you ahh learn the numbers (.) then it is okay
NR: of course (.) the numbers are vey important $ that is why it is not easy (.) I told you (.) but now I know how to write it ((laughs)) sooo (.) yeah it is good
M: okay (.) and here in the example (.) ahh you were talking o your friend
NR: yes (.) yes we were talking about something and (.) yes//
M: why did you choose this SPECIFIC example?
NR: .hhhh (.) ahhh no reason (0.4) I mean it is normal (.) normal a conversation
M: okay (.) so let us see (.) ahhhm (0.3) first here you are using a lot of funny faces
NR: yeah ((laughs)) she is funny (.) ahh we were talking about something (.) and she was insisted on something and I am the opposite
M: okay (.) so the many faces//
NR: laughter of course (.) so funny
M: and here is ahhm (.) the ez //
NR: yeah for ah (.) same voice when you talk in front of here (.) and ahhm as if it is real
M: okay (.) and ahh how about the (0.2) you used the three here
NR: yeah (.) you know the numbers (.) three (.) four (0.3) even nine (.) and ahhm seven and five (0.5) they are very known for what (.) and you cannot change
M: what do you mean
NR: I MEAN (.) you cannot change the language $ these number are for certain thing (.) I mean sounds (.) YOU CANNOT (.) change them .hh (.) I mean for example $ you invent a new number
M: hm
NR: it cannot happen (.) it will not work
M: okay
NR: BUT (.) for example $ (.) say you will write a word (.) it is up to you (0.2) you write it just as the way you say it (0.4) no one can say anything
M: hm
NR: but imagine $ (0.2) for example (.) something write new number
M: like whay?
NR: I do not know ((laughs))
M: ((laughs))
NR: I am saying imagine (.) not true ((laughs))
M: ((laughs)) okay I see
NR: yeah so we use to them $
M: but do not you feel Arabic is easier $
NR: it is EASIER (.) but as I told you not with anyone
M: okay
NR: that is all (.) we are done ((laughs)) I felt like a teacher
M: ((laughs))
NR: am kidding ((laughs))

M: I know (.) okay (0.2) do you feel like you want to say something more (.) or ahhm (0.4) there is something you would like to add?

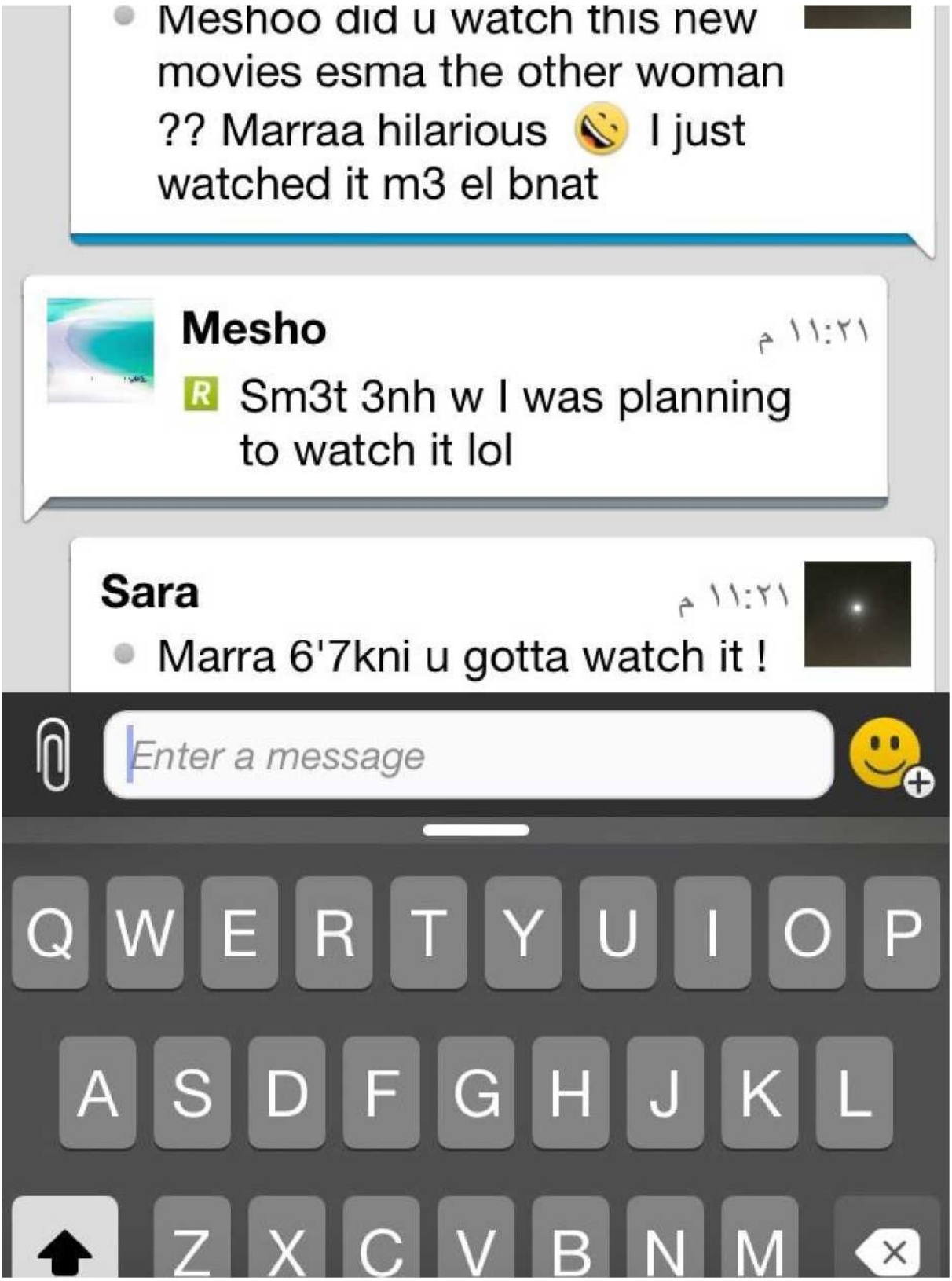
NR: no thank you

M: thank you

Appendix 20: The EEG Arabish Samples

Ahmed:

Amal:


Meshoo did u watch this new movies esma the other woman ?? Marraa hilarious I just watched it m3 el bnat
Mesho
١١:٢١ م
Sm3t 3nh w I was planning to watch it lol
Sara
١١:٢١ م
Marra 6'7kni u gotta watch it !
Enter a message
Q W E R T Y U I O P
A S D F G H J K L
Z X C V B N M

Reem:


Hi kefk
5:23 pm
Al7mdllah enty sh5bark?
5:24 pm
Kwaysa esh tsween am bored n6l3?
5:25 pm
Ntl3 wain?
5:30 pm
Madry ay shay
5:31 pm
Shofi w golely ma 3ndy shy
5:32 pm

Appendix 21: The EG Arabish Samples

Nouf:

Noura:


I'll be there in 10 mins ٧:٤٠ م
U r late ٧:٤١ م
I know 🙈 ٧:٤٢ م
Jaya wallah sorry ٧:٤٢ م
Ok ٧:٤٢ م
Open ٨:٠٠ م

Saeed:


Khalsto?
6:13 pm
La still
6:55 pm
Aha wen?
6:55 pm
Shwai I call
6:55 pm
Aha
6:55 pm
Kalem abo3abed
6:56 pm

Appendix 22: The MCG Arabish Samples

Huda:

Noor:


3ad lw esh asfa 😂
1:49 pm
😂😂😂😭😭😭
1:49 pm
Tkfeeeen 3ad ma legty ella ana
1:50 pm
😂😂 shfty
1:50 pm
E4a 9ar shy thani 3ad
1:51 pm
3la 7aab a4kr Ella aboi gal shay thani e6'ahr
1:51 pm
Wahlon
1:51 pm
5leni as2lh a7sn la ajeb el3ed 😂😂
1:52 pm

Sara:


Ee 😬😬
٧:٢٢ م
Ma 8arrart wsh el56ah
٧:٢٢ م
Btjeeeeen
٧:٢٢ م
Lol
٧:٢٢ م
Hhhhhhhh
٧:٢٢ م
E4a 3rfty golely
٧:٢٣ م
Asthbl tra bmrk 3la 6regy e7tmal shwai